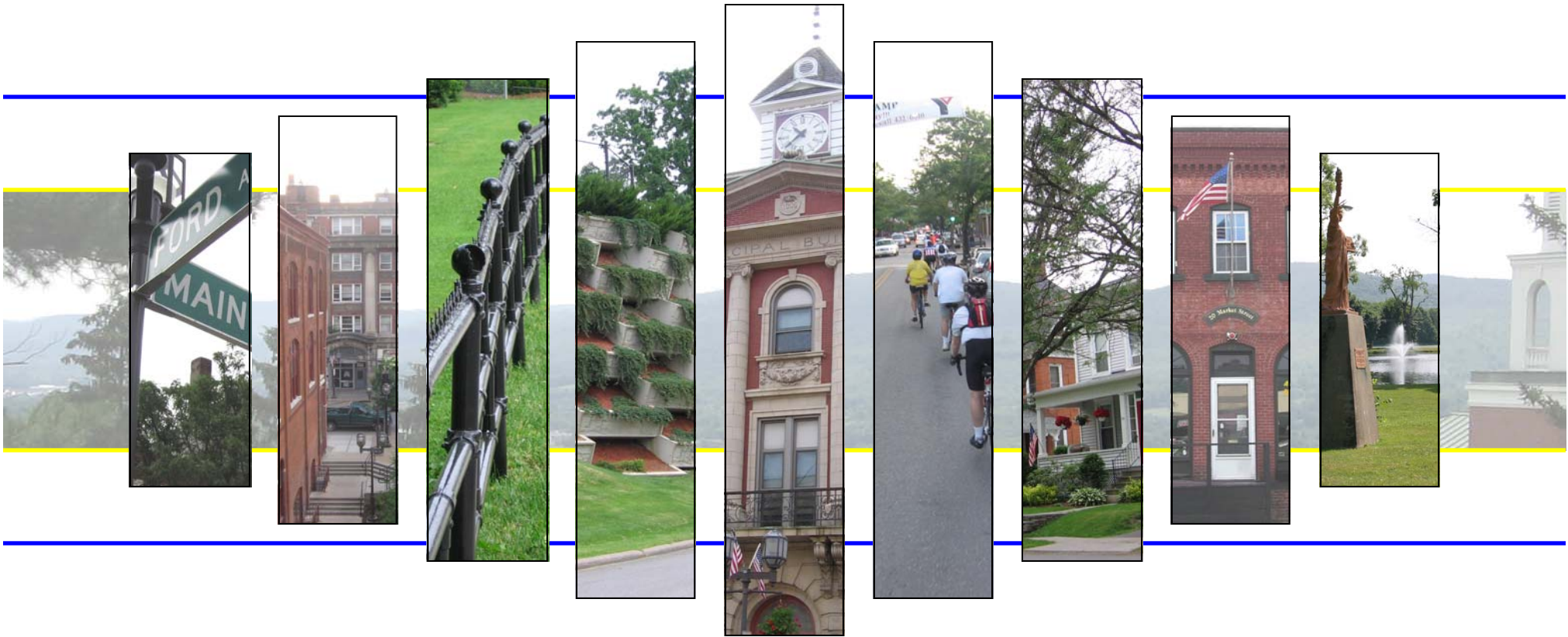




City of Oneonta, NY

John S. Nader, Mayor



2007 Comprehensive Plan

Prepared by:



186 North Water Street
Rochester, NY 14604
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The 2007 City of Oneonta Comprehensive Plan was prepared for John S. Nader, Mayor of the City of Oneonta, by Clark Patterson Associates. We wish to acknowledge the substantial contributions of the Mayor and each of the Steering Committee members. Special thanks go to committee chairs Barry Warren and Richard Miller, and to James Koury, City Clerk, who served as communications manager for the committee and provided valuable information throughout the process. All Steering Committee members are listed on page 7 of the Plan.



258 Main Street
Oneonta, NY 13820
<http://oneonta.ny.us>

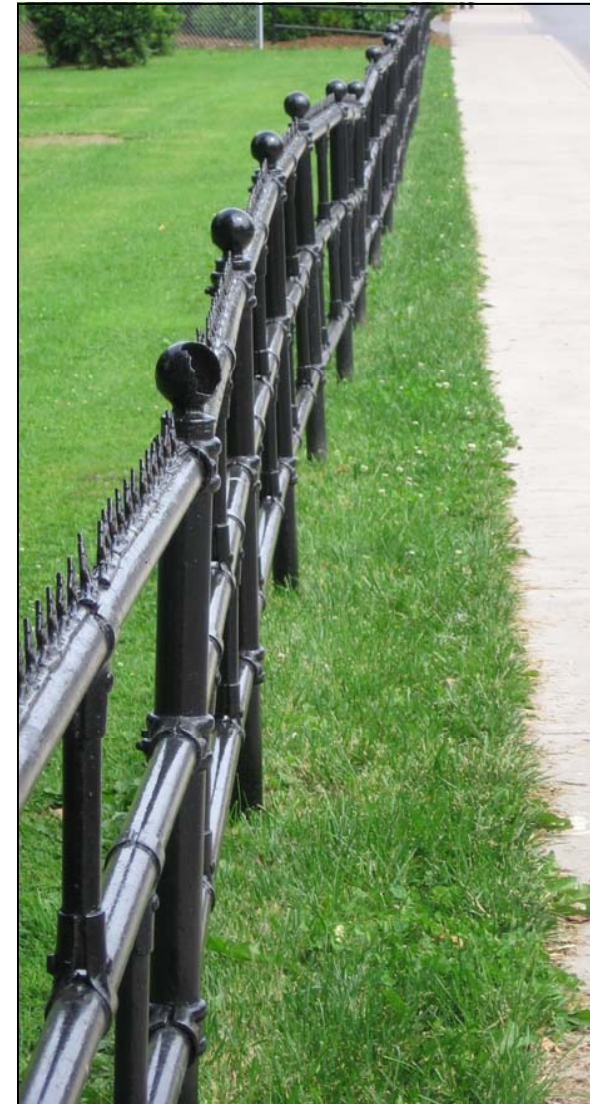


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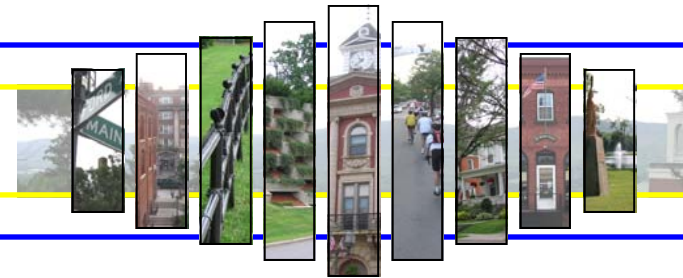
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Chapter 1 -



Introduction & Community Vision



Introduction

INTRODUCTION

Nestled in the foothills of the Catskills in Central New York lies the City of Oneonta, a charming community with a rich history and excellent quality of life. Approximately 13,000 people live in the city, including students at Hartwick College and SUNY Oneonta, who comprise nearly half the total population. Oneonta is known to many as a quaint college town, though in recent years its identity has expanded to include sports tourism and the arts. Additionally, the city boasts a well-preserved Main Street with grand historic buildings, giving the community a traditional, even Americana, flavor.

Oneonta enjoys many other assets, including stunning natural surroundings, scores of beautiful, historic homes, a tremendous park system, convenient access to Interstate 88, and close proximity to Cooperstown, which attracts hundreds of thousands of tourists every year. Despite these features, Oneonta faces significant challenges as it moves forward into the 21st Century.

During the final decades of the 20th Century, the economy of Upstate New York suffered from significant contraction in the manufacturing sector. Oneonta was impacted by this trend, resulting in many blue-collar jobs eliminated in the city and region. The city has a proud history of railroad operations, including a major rail yard and roundhouse that prior to its demolition was the largest in the world. In the decades following World War II, the rail industry began to decline, having a significant impact on Oneonta. In the face of these losses, the local economy has since transitioned to a focus on education, health care, and tourism but it has yet to reach the full potential of its workforce. Economic development is a major topic of concern for locals as they consider the quality of life for future generations.



Main Street Oneonta



Introduction

Although the city has preserved much of its traditional core, commercial and residential occupancy in the downtown has struggled in recent decades. There is more activity on Main Street than is typically found in other communities throughout Upstate New York, but downtown is still not as vibrant as it was in its heyday and lacks many of the everyday products and services desired by residents. This dilemma is partially due to the development of large-scale commercial businesses in Southside, an area immediately south of the city in the Town of Oneonta along NY State Route 23. It is also representative of some of the problems associated with separate governing bodies for the City and Town. Along with downtown revitalization, municipal cooperation and possible consolidation is one of the primary issues facing the community as they plan for their future.

Additional issues include: strengthening the city's identity as a regional and national tourism destination, preserving historic properties, addressing nuisance issues associated with college students and rental properties, beautification of community gateways and other important public spaces, and providing affordable housing for seniors and young families. Finally, many residents believe the structure of local government requires reorganization, namely the city charter, to allow for government officials to more effectively address these problems.



View of the Susquehanna River Valley from Hartwick College



Purpose of a Comprehensive Plan

PURPOSE OF A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The 2007 Comprehensive Plan of the City of Oneonta provides an overall framework for future public and private investment and decision making in the community. Investment can take many forms, such as, but not limited to, financial, civic, and creative resources. In the City of Oneonta, it is this collective investment by residents, businesses, colleges, churches, schools, volunteer organizations, and local government that will shape the physical, social, and economic character of the community.

The Plan articulates an overall vision for the city and the means to achieve the objectives set forth. The process for and the contents of the Plan are consistent with New York State City Law 28-a, which defines a comprehensive plan as:

“the materials, written and/or graphic, including but not limited to maps, charts, studies, resolutions, reports and other descriptive materials that identify the goals, objectives, principles, guidelines, policies, standards, devices and instruments for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the city. The city comprehensive plan shall...serve as a basis for land use regulation, infrastructure development and public and private investment, and any plans which may detail one or more topics of a town comprehensive plan.”

According to New York State law, the comprehensive plan must be adopted by Common Council following a public hearing. The approval process, however, does not preclude future review and amendment. The vision and policies contained in the Plan should be perceived as flexible. As the conditions upon which the document is based upon change, it is reasonable to assume that its contents may need to be changed as well. The Plan is intended to serve as a guide for the next 10 to 15 years. However, this plan should be reviewed at most every five years to gauge progress on implementation and perform needed maintenance. A more formal revision should occur at the end of the 10- to 15-year planning period.



Purpose of a Comprehensive Plan

It is the policy of New York State to encourage comprehensive planning for the sake of the health, welfare, and general prosperity of its citizens. Therefore, many state agencies recognize the existence of a comprehensive plan as a favorable, and sometimes required, condition for grants and other assistance for municipal projects. Granting agencies want to encourage municipalities to act in concert with a stated vision and clear objectives. They want to eliminate ad hoc projects and assure that funds are spent in pursuit of a well-defined purpose.



Historic home at Main and Grand



Crosswalk on Main St



Historic marker at Huntington Park



Process Overview

PROCESS OVERVIEW

In its simplest form, long-range comprehensive planning includes three key activities: understanding the present state, identifying the desired end state, and determining the best methods for achieving it. The City of Oneonta last adopted a comprehensive plan in 1995. The City has made substantial progress in realizing the goals of the 1995 Plan. However, economic, demographic, and physical environments are continuously evolving, which necessitates the revision of the adopted plan.



City Hall on Main Street

The process for the 2007 Plan was initiated to provide the community with an opportunity to participate in the creation of an updated comprehensive plan that will guide the future of the City. As every good comprehensive plan should, this Plan builds upon this community's strengths, addresses its weaknesses, capitalizes on opportunities and identifies the threats to the overall quality of life. The Plan accomplishes this by establishing a community vision and identifying policies, objectives and action items that address numerous issues related to improving the overall quality of life.

In late 2005, the Mayor's Office organized a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, made up of representatives from businesses, local and county government, the colleges, and the community at large. The Steering Committee was charged with working with planning consultants from Clark Patterson Associates to develop the comprehensive plan. Committee members represented diverse perspectives from within the city and served as an initial information source and sounding board for ideas and recommendations. The group was involved with all aspects of the project, including identifying key issues to be addressed, facilitating public input, and continuous review of each of the Plan's components.



Process Overview

Steering Committee Members

Michelle Eastman	Bob Lawson	Karen Sullivan
Vince Foti	Jeff Lord	Barry Warren
Maureen Hennessy	Richard Miller	Bill Youngs
Gary Herzig	Rob Robinson	
James Koury	Joe Ruffino	

In addition to the diverse perspectives represented on the Steering Committee, the comprehensive planning process included numerous opportunities for public input in order to build consensus around a vision for the city's future.

S.W.O.T. Analysis

Meetings were held with Steering Committee members and other community stakeholders to examine the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats in the city. This process is known as a S.W.O.T. Analysis, and it served to identify common themes and issues of concern in the community. A summary of the exercise is shown in Appendix A. Using the results of the S.W.O.T. Analysis, five policy areas were identified that would form the framework for the Plan:

- Destination & Image
- Economic Health & Revitalization
- Quality of Life
- Downtown
- Administration & Government



Steering Committee Meeting, including some members of the general public




Process Overview

Community Survey

A community survey was distributed to a random sampling of property owners throughout the city. The survey was designed to gauge support for a variety of issues. Approximately 34 percent of the surveys were returned, which is an excellent response rate. Survey responses were tabulated, analyzed and summarized for presentation to the Steering Committee and eventually the general public. The survey also provided an opportunity for respondents to submit written comments. The survey is included in Appendix B, with a summary report found in Appendix C.

Focus Groups

Once the five policy areas were identified through the S.W.O.T. Analysis, a series of five focus groups were held to address each policy area. Held in June 2006, each group was made up of 7-10 people, representing diverse perspectives from within the city. Within these two-hour sessions, participants dialogued about specific issues within their respective policy areas and brainstormed ideas for addressing these challenges. A summary of the focus group discussions can be found in Appendix D.



City of Oneonta Community Survey

This survey is being distributed to solicit community input on a wide range of topics that will be considered and addressed as part of the City's updated **Comprehensive Plan**. Your participation in this process is important to ensure that the direction of the Plan reflects community members' ideas and opinions (you may opt to have your response remain anonymous). Thank you in advance for your participation. During the course of updating the Plan, there will be several other opportunities for citizens to submit comments and help guide the process.

Please note that this survey is intended to assess conditions in the City proper, not the Town of Oneonta or the region as a whole (see map on the last page for reference).

Please return your completed survey to Clark Patterson Associates (see enclosed envelope) by June 9, 2006.

Part I – Community Values and Priorities

A. Which are the top TWO most influential factors in your decision to live in Oneonta? (Please select the top two reasons from the list below and write the corresponding item number on the lines in the response column.)

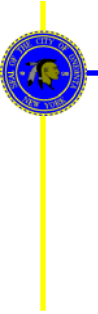
1. Born or raised in Oneonta	A 1: _____
2. Attending college	A 2: _____
3. Affordable housing	
4. Desire to live in traditional small city surrounded by rural countryside	
5. Convenient to work	
6. Access to recreation opportunities	
7. Other, please specify _____	

B. Please indicate whether you strongly oppose, oppose, support, strongly support or have no opinion about the following zoning and regulatory issues.

		Strongly Oppose	Oppose	No Opinion	Support	Strongly Support
1	Encouraging redevelopment of dilapidated or vacant urban areas					
2	More retail & commercial development design guidelines.					
3	Stricter property maintenance standards (landscaping, garbage cleanup, parked/stored vehicles).					
4	More protection of natural features (steep slopes, wetlands, woodlands, waterbodies, etc.).					
5	More preservation of historic sites and structures.					
6	Encouraging more upper story residential units in downtown.					
7	Encouraging more industrial development.					
8	Providing aesthetic guidelines for signs in commercial areas					
9	Incentive zoning (developer provides amenities such as permanent conservation of natural areas in exchange for incentives such as increased density)					

1

Sample page from survey



Process Overview

Public Meeting & Land Use Workshop

A public meeting and land use workshop was held at SUNY Oneonta in October 2006. The approximately 120 residents who attended the 3.5-hour meeting were given an update on the project, highlighting each of the steps leading up to current conditions. A Preferred Development Survey (PDS) was conducted, which asked participants to rank images from different communities based on their appropriateness for Oneonta. Various styles of architecture, signage, site development, and streetscaping were shown. The results of the PDS served to further refine the policies, objectives and strategies in the Plan. The ten highest rated images and the ten lowest rated images are shown on the following pages. Complete results of the PDS are shown in Appendix F.

The workshop also included a brainstorming exercise where participants discussed what they would like to see in their city, both tomorrow and when they retire. Draft policy statements were posted to allow participants to write comments and suggestions. Many ideas were generated throughout the public meeting and workshop, the majority of which are recorded in Appendix E.



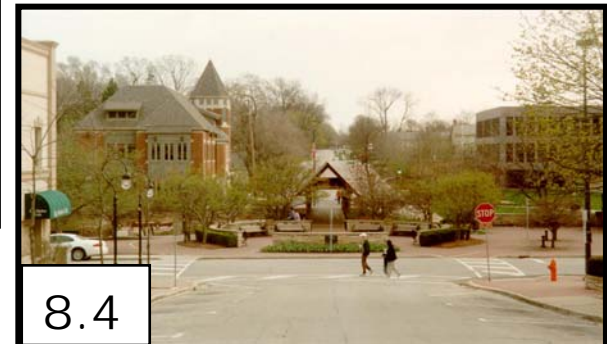
Morris Complex at SUNY Oneonta, site of the public meeting and land use workshop

Additionally, a presentation on the basics of land use and how it effects the character and quality of life in a community was provided. Several smaller groups were then formed, and each was given the task of devising a future land use plan for the city. Residents were asked to consider which land uses were appropriate for each part of the city, as well as noting urban design recommendations that would enhance the aesthetics and functionality of the community. Each group was also charged with examining the site of the former Delaware and Hudson Railyard, as this is the largest redevelopment opportunity in the city.



Process Overview

Highest Rated Images (scale of 1-10)





Process Overview

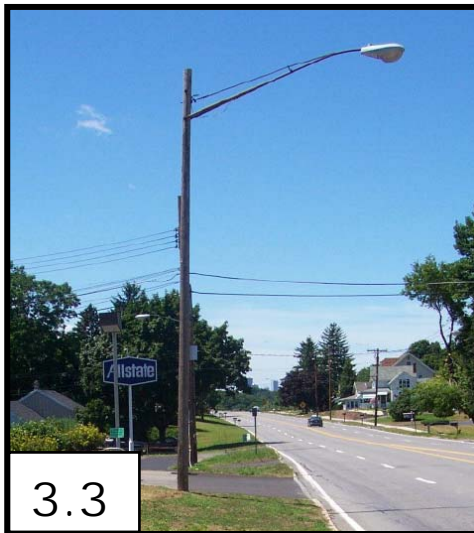
Highest Rated Images, continued (scale of 1-10)





Process Overview

Lowest Rated Images (scale of 1-10)





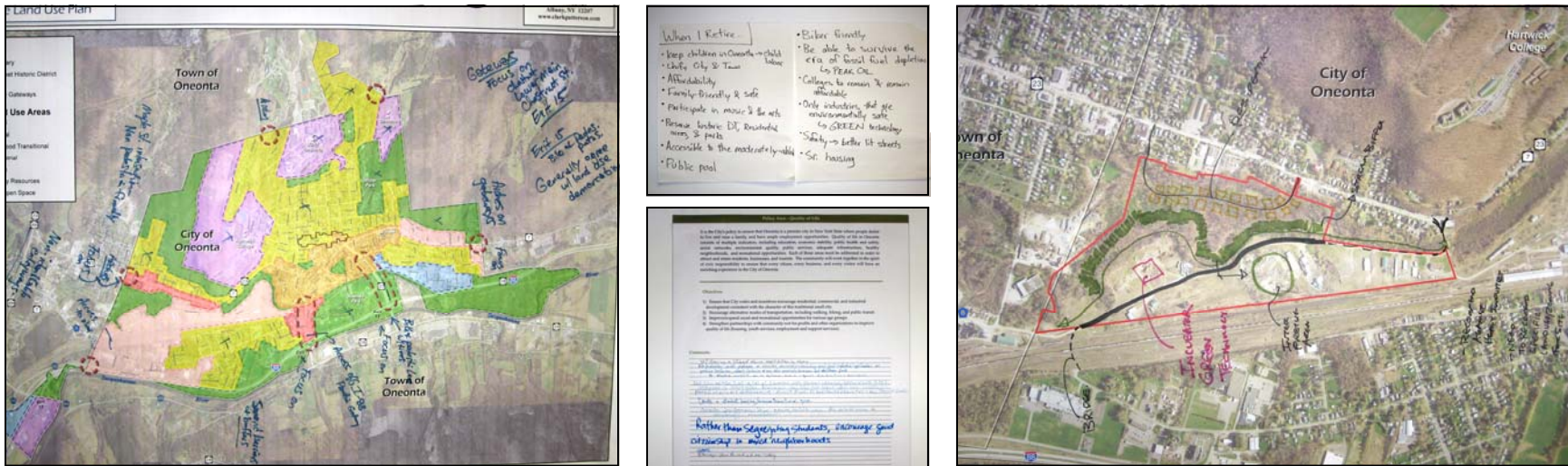
Process Overview

Lowest Rated Images, continued (scale of 1-10)





Process Overview



Examples of community input from the public meeting: future land use plan, brainstorming exercise, policy statement review, and concepts for the former Delaware & Hudson site

Other Sources of Input

In January 2007, representatives from the Steering Committee met with representatives from SUNY Oneonta, Hartwick College, and A.O. Fox Hospital. The meetings offered an additional opportunity for the community's largest institutions to discuss current conditions in the city and the potential for improvements.

In addition to these formal activities, numerous emails and letters were sent to the Steering Committee and City staff that included substantial feedback and fresh ideas for some of the more challenging issues. Throughout the planning process, the City Clerk has maintained a website dedicated to the comprehensive plan. The site makes all meeting minutes, draft documents, and other relevant items available to the public for viewing and feedback.



Community Vision Statement

COMMUNITY VISION STATEMENT

The Steering Committee meetings, S.W.O.T. Analysis, focus groups, public workshop, preferred development survey, and future land use plan review contained a relatively consistent collection of priorities and values expressed by the community. Using these priorities and values, the City adopted the following Community Vision Statement, which serves as the foundation for all policies, objectives, and action items contained in this Plan.

Vision of the City of Oneonta

Oneonta is a Community that:

- *Will always cherish and protect its traditional urban fabric, its surrounding natural beauty, and its diverse citizenry who value civic engagement;*
- *Will continuously develop strategic partnerships between government, businesses, higher education, and citizens to create a sustainable economic base.*
- *Is well-planned and environmentally sensitive, where all citizens have equal access to services and amenities, including plentiful recreational and cultural activities;*
- *Will continuously improve its standing as a regional destination for the arts, sports tourism, shopping and collegiate activity;*
- *Will provide the necessary infrastructure to support balanced transportation choices;*
- *Will retain existing businesses and attract new businesses that will tap into the tremendous potential of the local workforce, meet the needs of local residents and be designed to respect and improve their surroundings; and*
- *Is governed by officials that aggressively advance the quality of life in the community and are fully-equipped to enforce all of these values and priorities.*



Plan Components

PLAN COMPONENTS

Existing Conditions Analysis

This section of the Plan includes information such as history, demographics, housing, economics, and education. An extensive collection of maps is included, showing natural features, transportation systems, and other conditions relevant to planning for the community's future. This analysis provides the community with a better understanding of who they are, which improves their ability to plan for where they want to be in 15-20 years.

Policies, Objectives and Action Items

Utilizing the information collected from the survey, focus groups, existing conditions analysis, and Steering Committee meetings, a policy statement was developed for each of the five policy areas. Policy statements are typically broad in nature, in order to form the framework for a variety of objectives. Several objectives were developed for the policy areas, followed by a series of strategies, or action items, that can be used to achieve each of the objectives.

Action items were broken down into short-term, mid-term, long-term and ongoing time frames. All of the short-term strategies are then further classified according to their priority. This provides an additional level of guidance to community leaders as they seek to put the Plan into immediate action. Action items specifically related to arts and culture and city-college relations are grouped on separate pages.



Shops on Main Street



Fountain in Neahwa Park



Plan Components

Future Land Use Plan

Future land use planning involves identifying specific types of land uses for different areas of the city. While the process is not intended to delineate precise land use boundaries, nor should it be interpreted as a zoning ordinance, it is a physical and geographic expression of the values and priorities contained in the community vision and policy statements.

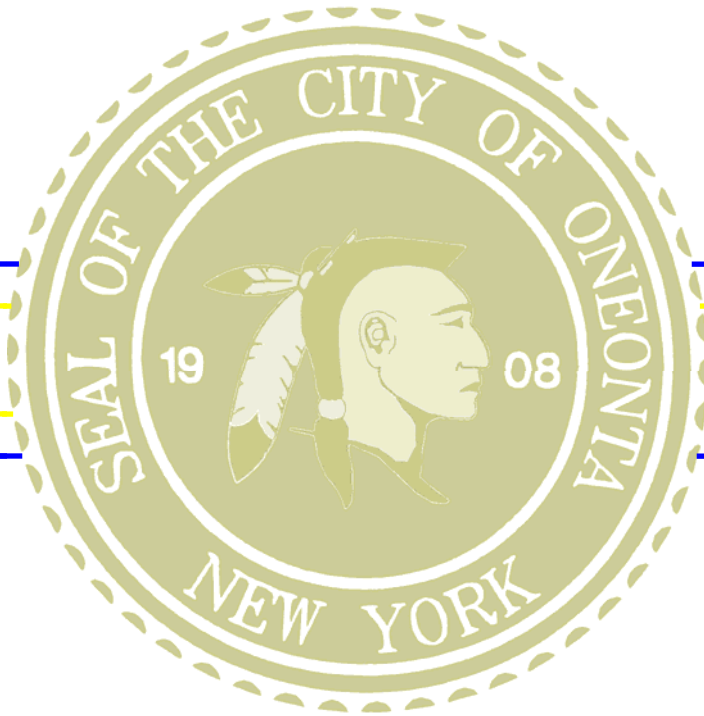
The future land use map shows the general location of where residential, commercial, mixed-use, open space, and other land uses are considered appropriate. Land use planning in cities is unique in that the majority of land in the city is already developed. However, change does occur over time, and this typically happens along the edges of existing land uses. For example, some residential neighborhoods in the city are bisected by state highways. Over the course of several decades, these corridors have transitioned to a mix of commercial uses while the rest of the neighborhood has remained residential. It is in these transitional areas where change is more frequent and opportunities exist for redevelopment that is of a more appropriate scale and design.



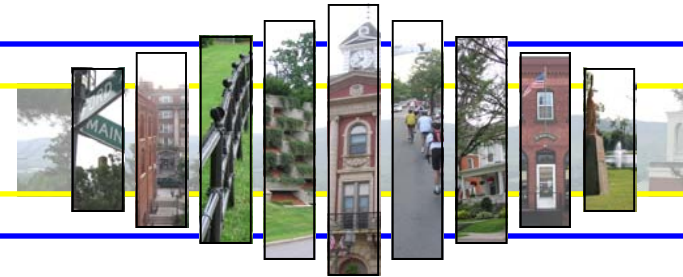
Residences in Center City neighborhood



Former residence converted to commercial use along Chestnut Street



Chapter 2 -



Existing Conditions



Community Profile

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Location (Map 1)

Oneonta is located halfway between Albany and Binghamton on the banks of the Susquehanna River. Known as the “City of the Hills”, it is located in the southcentral part of Otsego County. Oneonta is accessible from the east and west by Interstate 88, which runs along the southern boundary of the city, and by NY State Route 23, which becomes Main Street within the city limits and continues on to West Oneonta. NY State Routes 7, 28 and 205 connect Oneonta to other municipalities in the region.



Fall foliage on the surrounding hillsides

Local Government

The City of Oneonta is governed by an eight-member Common Council, that represent the eight wards of the City and serve four-year terms. The Council is presided over by the Mayor, a part-time position consisting of a 4-year term. The Common Council is responsible for the legislative affairs in addition to managing and controlling the finances and property of the City. The transactions of the City are voted on and require a simple majority of the Council members, with the exception of taxes, assessments and ordinances. The departments in the City include Assessment, City Clerk, Code Enforcement, City Chamberlain, Community Development/Engineering, Common Council, Fire, Personnel, Police, Purchasing, Recreation, and the Mayor’s Office. The City’s administrative functions take place at City Hall which is located on Main Street.



City of Oneonta Comprehensive Plan

Location Map



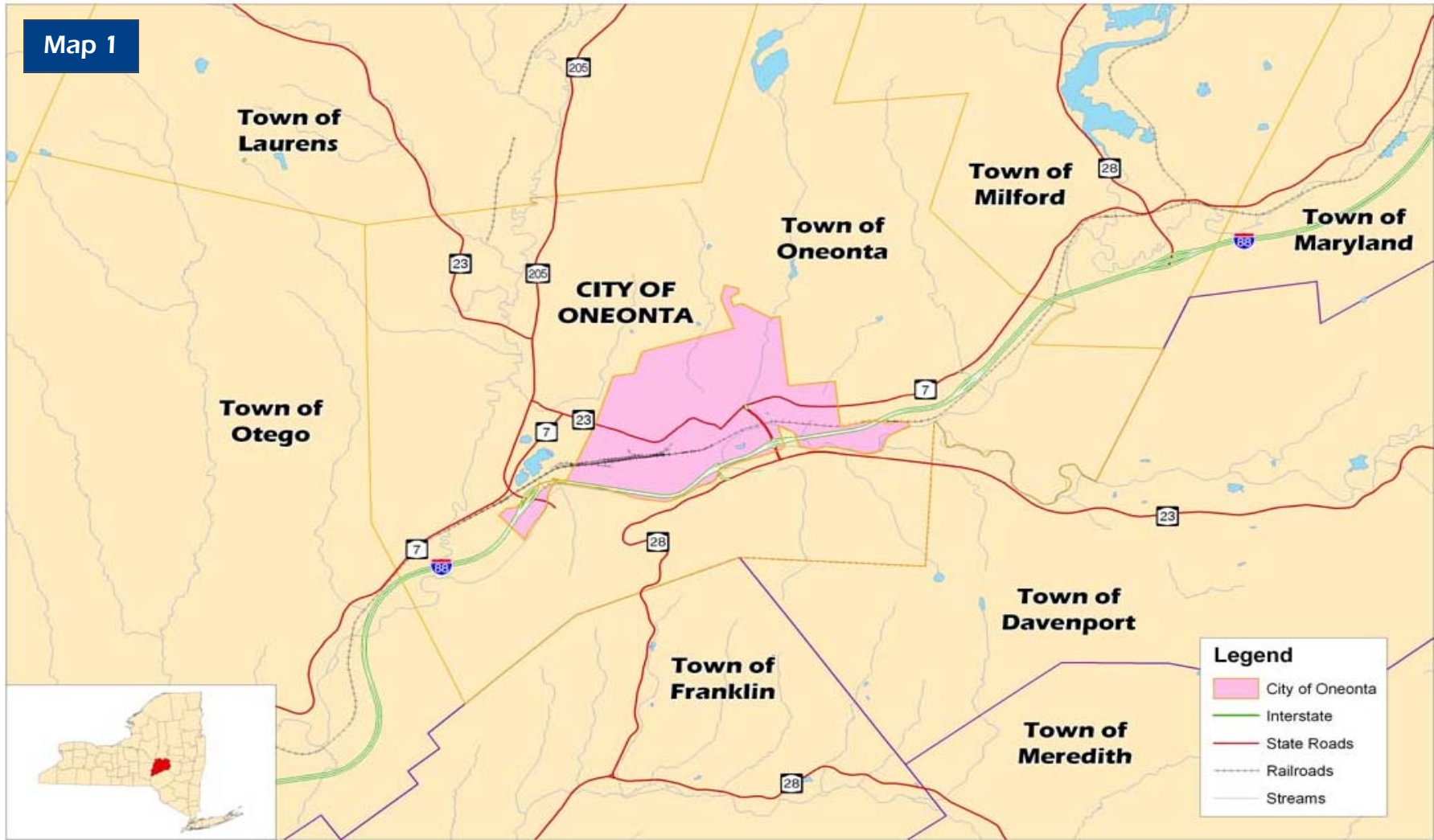
0 0.5 1 2 Miles

Prepared February 2006



382 Broadway
Albany, NY 12207

Map 1





Community Profile

City History

The City of Oneonta and surrounding region was long inhabited by several Indian tribes, including the Mohawks, Oneidas, Senecas, and Tuscaroras; members of the Six Nations that lived throughout the northeastern United States. Nestled among the valleys and located at the convergence of several large creeks and rivers, the area was easily accessible and became a semi-permanent settlement to Indian travelers. Evidence of a main trail running along present day Main Street was discovered in the past along with other artifacts throughout the area.

The first non-Indian settlers in the present day City of Oneonta were Dutch and Germans, who were driven from their homes in other areas of Otsego County during the Revolutionary War. First known as Milfordville, Oneonta grew into a farming community, as well as home to several grist and saw mills. Proximity to the Susquehanna River provided power to these mills as well as easy transportation to cities with larger markets. The community was officially given the name Oneonta in 1832 after the first post office was established 15 years prior. The name Oneonta translates to “stony place” or “a place of open rocks.”

Growing slowly at first, the community gained momentum starting in 1826 when talk of a railroad through the area began. It wasn't until 1865 that the first train ran through Oneonta. The area grew as an important transportation hub, especially for the rail industry. The industrial age relied heavily on coal from Pennsylvania to fuel factories in the northeast, consequently the Albany & Susquehanna Railroad, renamed the Delaware & Hudson around 1875, was used often. As a central location between



SUNY Oneonta



Community Profile

Binghamton and Albany, Oneonta became a prime area for repair shops and freight car production. Oneonta was also home to what was once the world's largest and longest roundhouse turntable, which was 75 feet in diameter and later enlarged to 105 feet. The roundhouse itself was over 400 feet in diameter and housed 52 cars.

Around this same time period, the population of the community doubled from what it was in 1870. As the community grew, so did the surrounding businesses and, in turn, the quality of life improved. Another sector of the community was established during this boom time as well – higher education. SUNY Oneonta, originally known as the Oneonta Normal School, was founded in 1889 and Hartwick College opened in 1928. Hartwick College was a derivative of the Hartwick Seminary, first established in 1797 by a Lutheran missionary.

Oneonta was officially incorporated as a city in 1909, which also was the peak of its rail industry and remained so for another decade. After World War II, diesel engines became popular and employment at the rail yards began to slowly decline. However, during this same period, enrollment grew at both of Oneonta's colleges due to the return of soldiers from war and the GI Bill. Urban Renewal and increased use of the automobile reshaped the face of downtown Oneonta and also helped to accelerate the decline of the rail industry. In 1954, the demolition of the Oneonta roundhouse began and the Delaware & Hudson ended operations at the rail yard in the mid 1990's.

Even without its historical industry, the City continues to flourish in the areas of higher education, health care and more recently regional tourism and recreation, which have helped to make the area a great place to live and work.



Community Profile

Community Assets

The City of Oneonta has transformed over time, evolving from an Indian settlement, to a center of railroad activity, to an area rich in education, history, and culture. SUNY Oneonta and Hartwick College continue to provide vast opportunities for higher learning as well as cultural and economic resources to the community. The location of the city in the foothills of the Catskill Mountains and among various waterways offers boundless, year-round recreational activities. Neighborhood parks, such as Neahwa and Wilber Park, are located within walking distance from people's homes and provide passive and active recreational activities to the community. Additionally, there are numerous museums that draw tourists to the area, including the National Soccer Hall of Fame, Cooperstown National Baseball Hall of Fame, Leatherstocking Railway Historical Society, Yager Museum at Hartwick College, and the SUNY Science Museum.



Wilber Park



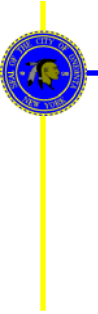
Neahwa Park



National Soccer Hall of Fame



National Baseball Hall of Fame
(Cooperstown, NY)



Demographics & Housing

DEMOGRAPHICS & HOUSING

Community Planning is a complex process that requires considerable forethought. The demographics and housing portion of the Comprehensive Plan addresses a wide range of conditions that affect the social, economic and environmental character of the City of Oneonta.

Data Analysis

Planning for the future requires a clear understanding of current conditions and recent trends. A look at these trends allows community leaders to make informed decisions about future direction. The remainder of this section of the plan provides useful information on a wide variety of topics affecting the social, economic, and environmental character of the City of Oneonta.

Demographic composition is a collection of population characteristics that defines a community. Future policies, land use decisions, and development often depend on a community's growth or decline, age distribution, educational attainment, transportation commuting trends, places of work and occupation, changes in income, and household characteristics.

In many of the categories, data from several points in time are provided to show the trends in the City. Observing changes over time allows the community to make assumptions about future progress. Where possible, information from other sources, including Otsego County, are included as well, providing context and a glimpse of regional dynamics that may be affecting Oneonta.

Reliable sources such as the Census Bureau, the New York State Department of Transportation, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Otsego County Planning Department, the City of Oneonta, and the



Demographics & Housing

Southern Tier East Regional Planning Development Board were used to compile the data needed for an accurate representation of Oneonta and the surrounding region.

Population

According to the 2000 Census Bureau figures, the City of Oneonta’s population is 13,292, down 5.0 percent from 1990 (13,954). Otsego County’s population, on the other hand, grew at a modest 1.9 percent from 1990 to its 2000 population of 61,676. Based upon historical population information, the city’s population has steadily decreased from its peak population of 16,030 in 1970 while the County’s has been increasing at a moderately slow rate. The sharp population decline between 1970-1980 followed a national trend of migration from central cities to the suburbs. According to the “Population Trends in New York State’s Cities” report from the NYS Comptroller’s Office, this period of time had the

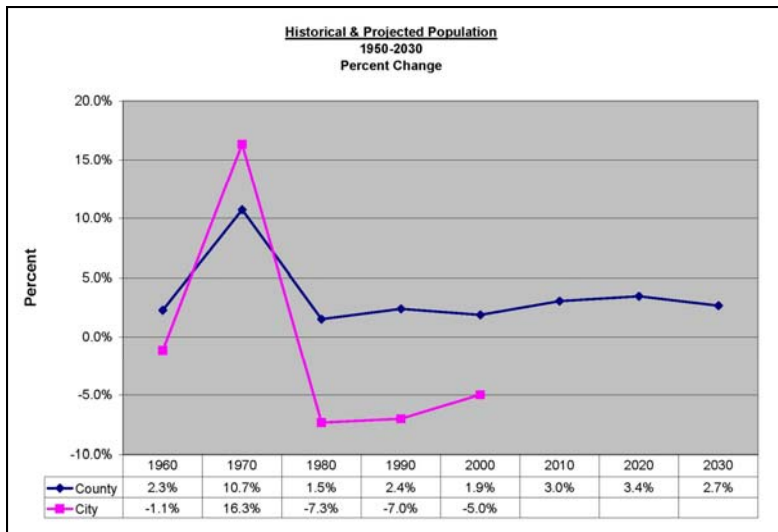


Figure 1: Source, US Census Bureau

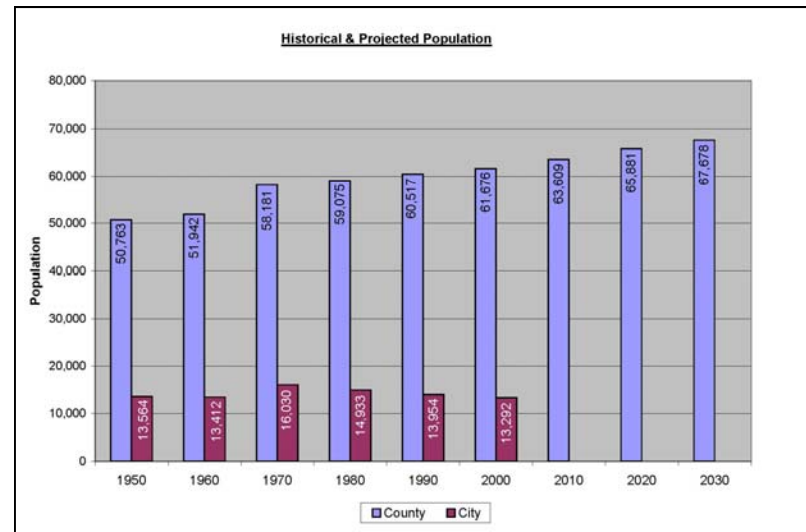


Figure 2: Source, US Census Bureau and Otsego County Planning Department



Demographics & Housing

greatest degree of decline, with a 12 percent loss in cities statewide.

2030 projection figures for the County of Otsego indicate the area will continue to grow at a rate of approximately 3 percent, or 2,000 people, per year. Population projections for the City of Oneonta are not currently available. However, it is likely to assume, based on the three decade trend in population changes, that the population for the city would remain stable or continue to slowly decline, which mirrors other small cities in Central and Upstate New York.

Age

Another factor to consider is the age breakdown in the community. Analyzing age distribution provides insight that will help a community adequately accommodate its residents with sufficient public services. For example, an increase in the number of children under age 19 could indicate the need for enhanced or additional educational resources, while an increase of those over age 65 might indicate a need for more senior-level services or housing.

As Figure 3 illustrates, there were marginal changes in the City's age breakdown occurring between 1990 and 2000. For example,

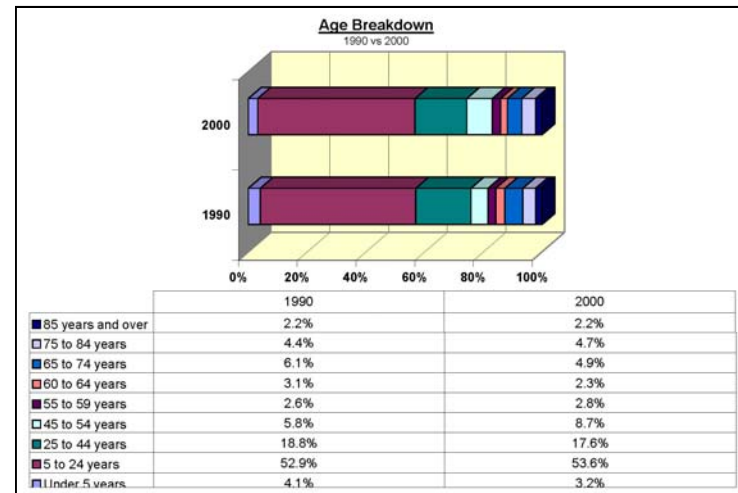


Figure 3: Source, US Census Bureau

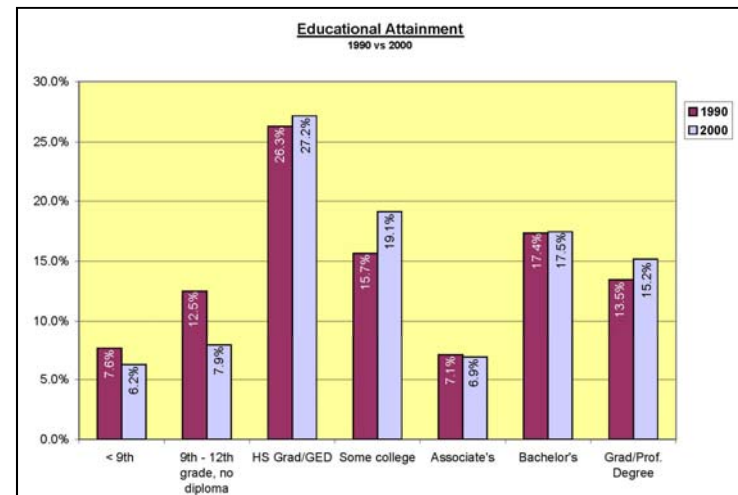


Figure 4: Source, US Census Bureau



Demographics & Housing

the number of children under the age of five decreased by about 1 percent. Although this decrease may not be large enough to drastically impact services, this drop could change classroom numbers and sizes if this decrease continues into the future. Most age groups had a 1 percent change between 1990 and 2000, while the largest change was in the 45-54 group. People in this age bracket increased almost 3 percent to 8.7 percent of the total population. This small increase could indicate the need for additional housing for “empty nesters,” families with college children, and for additional senior services within the next 10 years.

Education

One of the most influential factors in determining a community’s quality of life, especially for families with children under age 19, is the quality and success of the educational system. The percentage of residents with no diploma or less than a high school or GED education decreased by a combined percentage of 6 percent between 1990 and 2000, while those with a high school/GED education or higher increased. Overall, 58.7 percent of the City in 2000 had some level of post-secondary education, compared with 53.7 percent in 1990. This indicates that the community as a whole is fairly well educated and is pursuing a higher

City of Oneonta - Jobs by Industry

Industry	Percent
Educational, health and social services	41.2%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accomodation and food services	16.0%
Retail trade	12.2%
Manufacturing	4.9%
Public administration	4.3%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	3.8%
Information	3.7%
Other services (except public administration)	3.6%
Construction	3.4%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	3.4%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	1.5%
Wholesale trade	1.1%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0.8%

Figure 5: Source, US Census Bureau

City of Oneonta - Jobs by Occupation

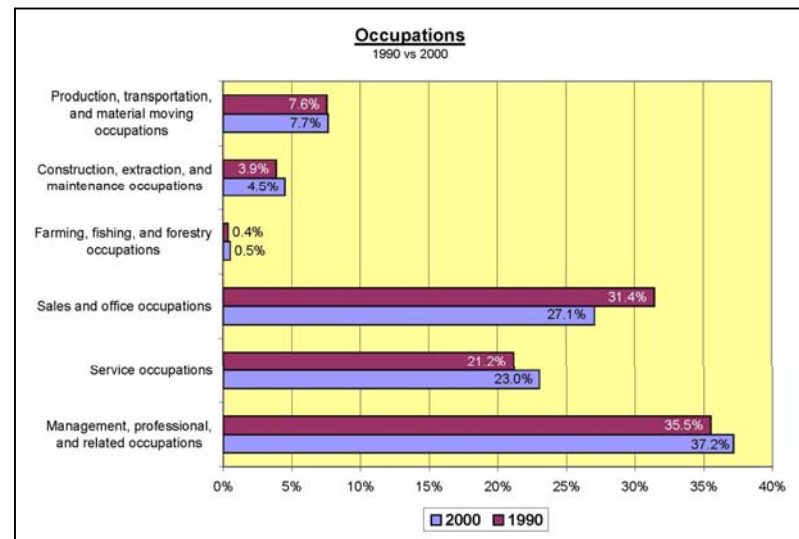


Figure 6: Source, US Census Bureau



Demographics & Housing

education, which positively impacts the potential for industry and service-based job development.

Employment and Occupation

In addition to population growth, the success and viability of a community is tied to the various types of employment opportunities and industry available in the area. With SUNY Oneonta, Hartwick College, and A.O. Fox Hospital as the main industries in the City, it is no surprise that the majority (41.2 percent) of those employed in the area work in the educational, health, and social services industry (Figure 5). Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodations, and food services as well as retail trade were the other top industries employing a majority of the residents. Other major employers include New York State Gas and Electric (NYSEG), Verizon, Corning Corporation, Mold-A-Matic Corp, Association of Retarded Citizens (ARC), and the Daily Star.

Industry describes the kind of business conducted by a person's employing organization, while occupations describe the type of work that person does on the job. According to Census data, the most prevalent occupation in the northeastern United States and Otsego County is sales and office occupations. However, as seen in Figure 6, this sector is the second largest in the city, decreasing by 4.3 percent since 1990. In fact, this was the only sector to decline between 1990 and 2000. Management, professional, and related occupations accounted for the largest percentage of city residents at 37.2 percent, a 1.5 percent increase from 1990. Included within this sector are those employed in education, health, and social services, which was also the largest industry for the City of Oneonta.

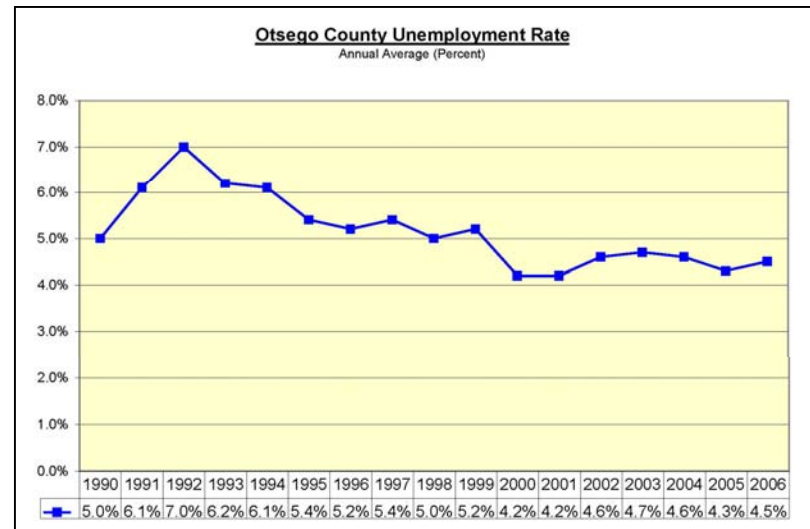


Figure 7: Source, Bureau of Labor Statistics

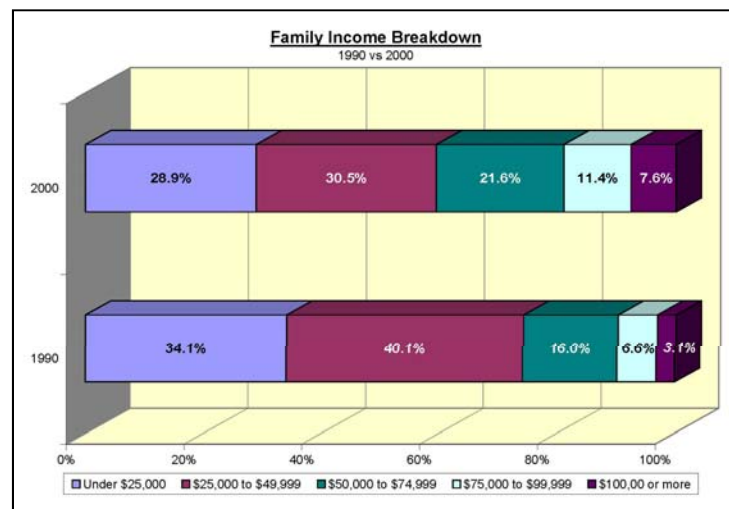
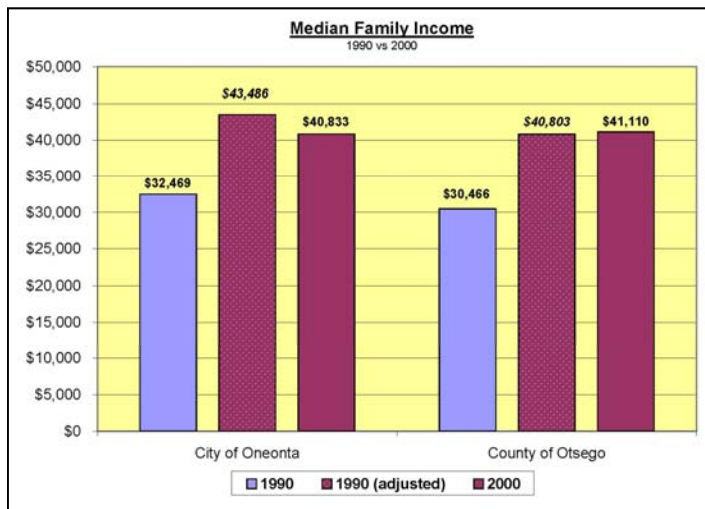


Demographics & Housing

The unemployment rate is a figure that provides a general sense of the community's economic health. Although it does not provide a complete picture, it does give insight into job trends in an area. Bureau of Labor Statistics unemployment rates are available only for areas with a population of 25,000 or more. Therefore, a look at unemployment in Oneonta can only be examined at the county level. As seen in Figure 7, the unemployment rate for the county has been slowly declining from its high of 7.0 percent in 1992. As of August 2006, the rate was 4.5 percent (seasonally adjusted), which is lower than the state-wide rate of 5.6 percent.

Income

Income levels are measured in various ways. The most common measures are median family income and median household income. In order to obtain a more accurate picture of income levels for the City on Oneonta, median family income is the preferred measure because it factors out the impact of college student households. Based on 2000 Census data, the median family income in the city was \$40,833, when compared to 1990 income adjusted to 2000 dollars, the



Figures 8-9: Source, US Census Bureau



Demographics & Housing

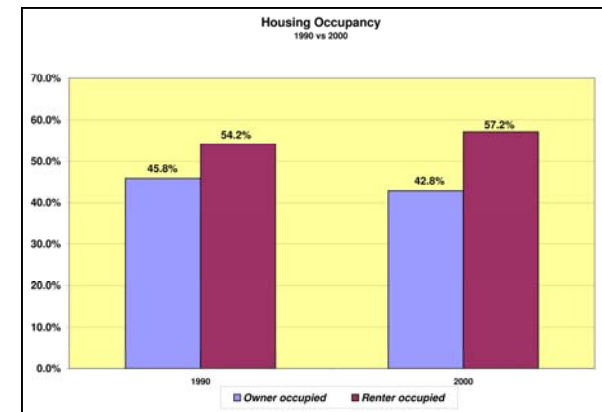
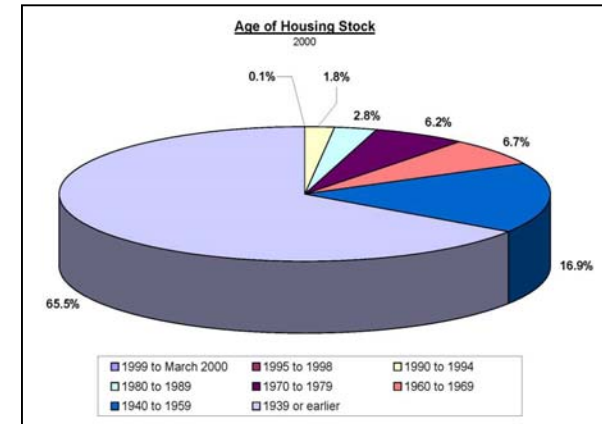
median family income has actually decreased 6 percent. This correlates to comments suggested at steering committee meetings that identified low-paying jobs as a weakness in the area. County-wide income remained relatively unchanged during the same time period; the income levels for the City are within a few hundred dollars less than the County figures in 2000.

A further breakdown of income data shows that those earning under \$50,000 actually decreased within the past 10 years. Higher income brackets, or those earning more than \$75,000, doubled from 1990 to 2000 as seen in Figure 9. Residents who earned between \$50,000 and \$74,999 also increased by approximately 80 people, or 5.6 percent. This increase in income levels could be associated with an increasing number of people attaining higher levels of education.

Housing

A majority of Oneonta's housing stock (65.5 percent) was built prior to 1939. Older housing stock presents the city with challenges and opportunities. While older homes often have great architectural details and character, they can detract from the surrounding area if the homes have not been maintained or are not up to current building codes.

Twelve percent of homes in the city are in a vacancy status (i.e. for rent/sale, seasonal, not occupied, etc.) and a majority of those that are occupied are rented (57.2 percent). With two major colleges within the city limits, the



Figures 10-11: Source, US Census



Demographics & Housing

high percentage of renters is not surprising. However, this can increase the potential for inadequate property maintenance, which can negatively impact the surrounding neighborhood's appearance and housing values. The amount of owner-occupied units has decreased slightly between 1990 and 2000 (3 percent or 200 units). However, the US Census reports that the median value for owner occupied units has remained stable within the past 10 years at around \$72,700.



Residences in the Center City neighborhood



Existing Land Use

EXISTING LAND USE (Map 2)

The City of Oneonta has 3,586 parcels representing approximately 2,201 acres of land. Oneonta's total assessed land value is \$633,421,880.00 (including structures and improvements), while the land is valued at \$48,961,236.00. This data is based on digital information obtained from the Otsego County Real Property Tax Office.

CODE	PROPERTY CLASS	# PARCELS	% OF TOTAL	ACREAGE	% OF TOTAL	ASSESSED LAND VALUE	% OF TOTAL	ASSESSED TOTAL VALUE	% OF TOTAL
100	Agricultural	0	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
200	Residential	2597	72.42%	599.80	27.25%	25,821,100	52.74%	204,140,185	32.23%
300	Vacant	453	12.63%	582.34	26.45%	5,405,020	11.04%	6,022,520	0.95%
400	Commercial	436	12.16%	208.79	9.48%	8,981,316	18.34%	102,472,534	16.18%
500	Recreation and Entertainment	20	0.56%	143.47	6.52%	1,164,300	2.38%	5,671,000	0.90%
600	Community Service	49	1.37%	436.92	19.85%	5,790,700	11.83%	300,350,910	47.42%
700	Industrial	8	0.22%	32.92	1.50%	870,500	1.78%	4,747,200	0.75%
800	Public Service	14	0.39%	195.01	8.86%	882,600	1.80%	9,852,531	1.56%
900	Wild, Conservation, Forest	1	0.03%	2.12	0.10%	45,700	0.09%	165,000	0.03%
0	Property Data Unavailable	8	0.22%	0.00	0.00%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
TOTAL		3586	100.00%	2201.37	100.00%	48,961,236	100.00%	633,421,880	100.00%

Source: Otsego County Real Property Tax Office, 2005.

Residential

Approximately 82 percent of Oneonta's parcels are assessed as residential. In general, residential development is located north of Main Street between SUNY Oneonta and Hartwick College campuses. Additional development is located along the River Street corridor in the southern section of the city. Parcel sizes are primarily a quarter of an acre or less, with few over acre in size. Seventy-eight percent of the residential homes are single-family, while 21 percent occupy 2- and 3-family houses. Higher density apartments, or "multiple residences" as classified by the County, make up the additional homes. According to the US Census, the City of Oneonta has an aging housing stock with over 65 percent of the homes



Existing Land Use

constructed prior to 1939. A more suburban style type of development has been followed north of the city in design and scale. Homes in this area are located on larger lots with a more curvilinear streets, rather than a more traditional, urban street grid.

Commercial

The city has 436 parcels classified as commercial properties. These commercial areas are found primarily along Main Street, which gives the city a more traditional urban feel. Warehouses and multi-use buildings are located outside of the Main Street corridor, most of which are between Chestnut Street and River Street near the former Oneonta Roundhouse area. Since commercial uses tend to demand less in public services than residential uses, maintaining an appropriate balance between residential and commercial land is critical to minimizing the tax burden placed on City residents.

Industrial

Eight parcels, encompassing 33 acres, are classified as industrial uses in the City of Oneonta. Six of the parcels are used for manufacturing purposes by companies such as the former KMS Plastics Company. The other 2 tracts of land are occupied by Otsego Ready Mix, Inc. as mines/quarries for cement and concrete manufacturing.

Vacant

Vacant lands represent 12 percent, or 582 acres, of property in the City of Oneonta. The largest properties are located on the western side of the city north of Hartwick College and on the old Oneonta Roundhouse parcel. Ownership of the parcels varies from the County IDA to private holdings by the schools. The amount of space available represents vast redevelopment opportunities for the city to explore.

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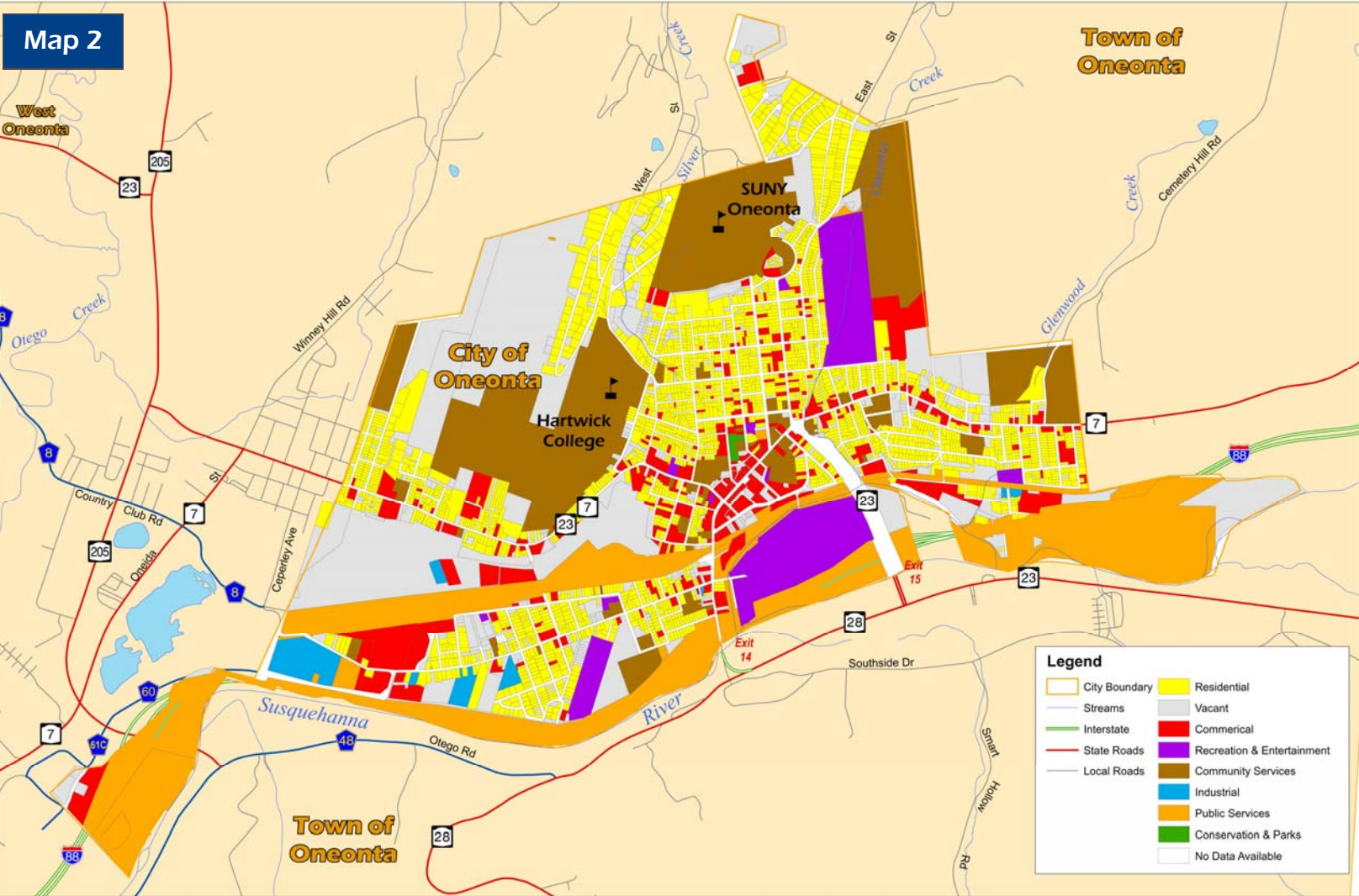
Existing Land Use



0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

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Natural Features

NATURAL FEATURES

Economy, population, and other demographic information can assist community leaders on how an area will grow, but the natural features dictate *where* that community can grow. Features such as steep slopes, wetlands, rivers, and unstable soils can make development unsuitable. Working with existing land features ensures a sustainable and environmentally friendly community.

Topography (Map 3)

Oneonta is nestled in the valley of the Appalachian Uplands Province, the major physiographic province in southern New York that stretches down to Alabama. The terrain consists of ridges varying from 1,000 to 2,000 feet above sea level divided by large streams or rivers. The terrain is much higher in the south and tends to become lower in elevation approaching the Mohawk Valley. A varying climate of wet and cool temperatures produces the abundant mix of forests.

The area has a rolling terrain marked with few steep slopes. However some areas, especially east and south of the city limits, have slopes upwards of 45 percent. Steep slopes generally indicate areas where development should be avoided due to unstable soils. Most of the city is located on level land with the exception of the areas to the north, including the SUNY Oneonta and Hartwick College campuses. A majority of the slopes in the City are in the 3-15 percent range.

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Topography

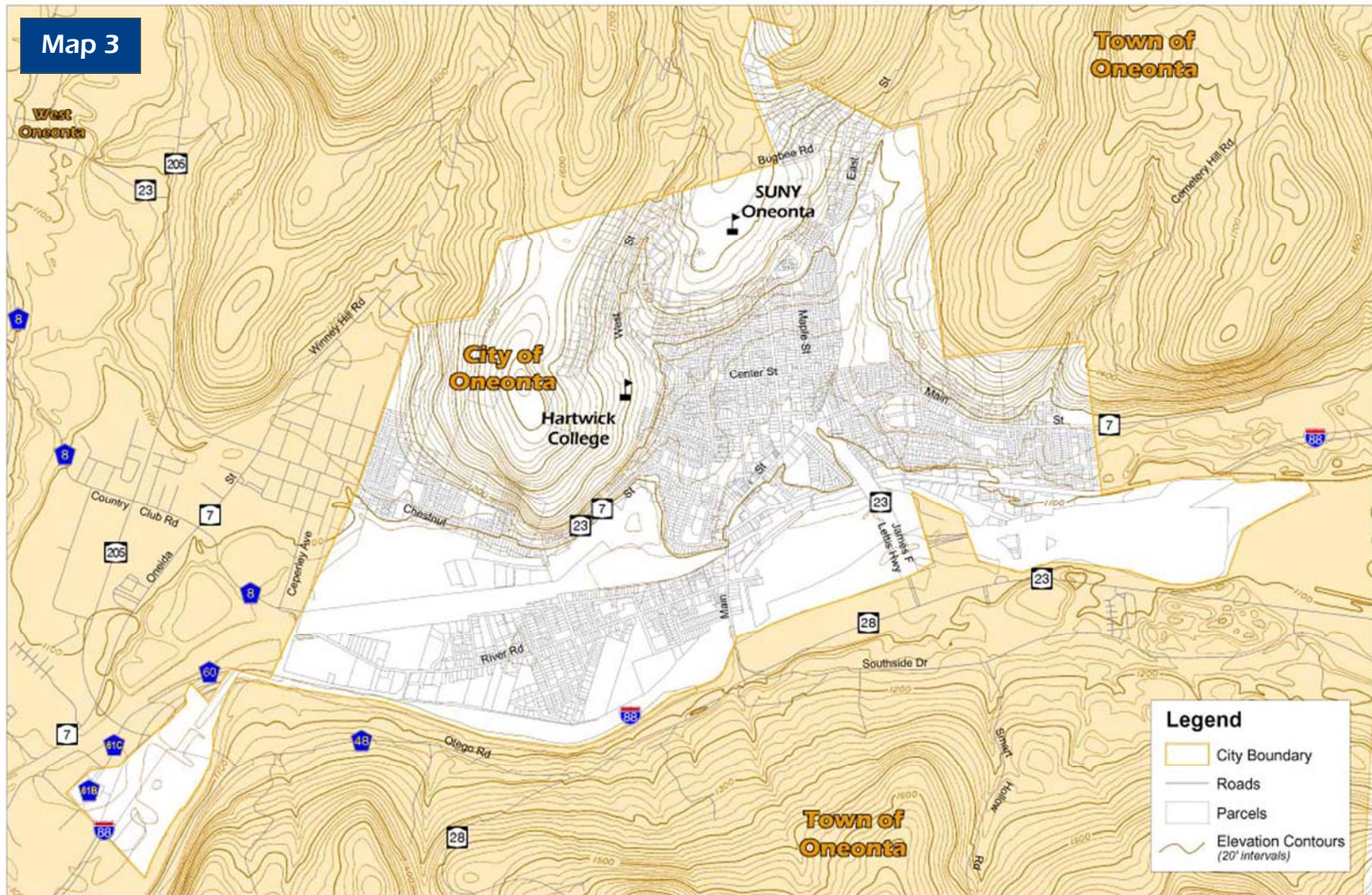


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Map 3





Natural Features

Waterbodies (Map 4)

Rivers: A watershed is defined as the area of land that drains into a particular water body. The City of Oneonta drains south into the Upper Susquehanna River Basin, which ultimately drains into the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland. The Susquehanna River begins at Otsego Lake near Cooperstown and winds through southern New York, western Pennsylvania, and Maryland before joining the Chesapeake Bay near Baltimore, Maryland and terminating into the Atlantic Ocean. The Susquehanna River flows 444 miles carrying an estimated 22 billion gallons of water daily. The 16th largest river in the United States, the Susquehanna is a prime waterbody for fishing, boating, and other recreational activities. A variety of fish including muskie, walleye, smallmouth bass, panfish, catfish and carp inhabit the river. Other major streams and creeks include Otego Creek to the west, Silver and Oneonta Creek which flow through the City, and Glenwood Creek to the east.

Floodplains: According to digital Flood Insurance Rate Mapping (FIRM), floodplains in the City are located primarily in the southern portion around the Susquehanna River. The City has taken measures to control flooding in the Sixth Ward neighborhood and around Neahwa park through the construction of levees and removable flood walls.

Wetlands: The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC) regulates wetlands that are 12.4 acres or greater. There are several wetland areas located within the City limits, including ON-7 & ON-9, which are south of Chestnut Street on the former site of the Oneonta Roundhouse and the Canadian Pacific railyard. ON-6 is found on the eastern tip of the City south of the I-88 corridor, and ON-10 is south of CR-8 and east of Oneida Street. ON-10 is the only wetland not located within the City limits. Currently, these wetlands are on land that is either vacant or used for public services. Federally regulated wetlands are not categorized by the NYS DEC and may exist within the City. In order to avoid costly fines and penalties, developers should contact the NYS DEC Regional Office 4 for permitting information.

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**City of Oneonta
Comprehensive Plan**

Waterbodies

N

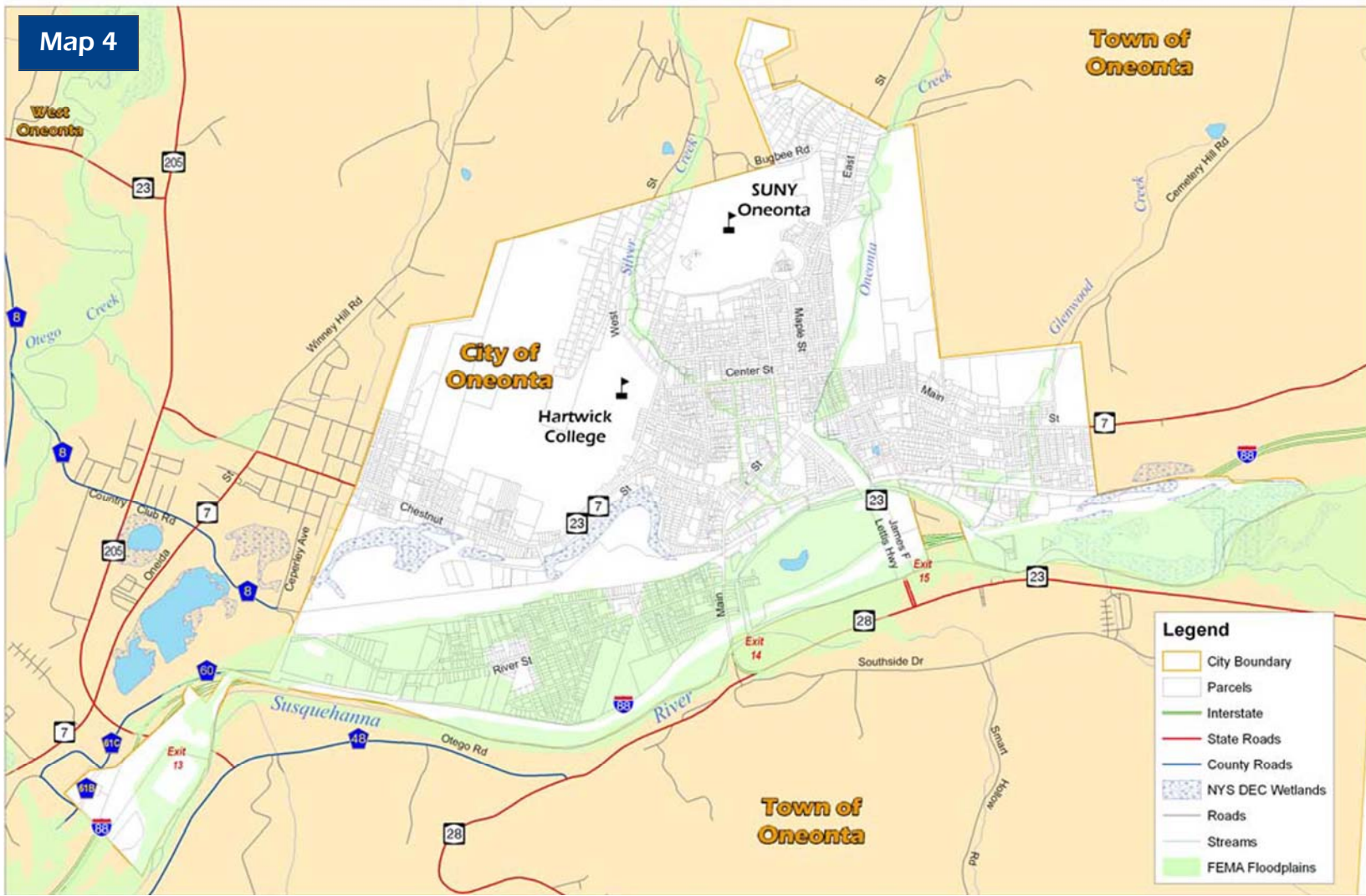
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Natural Features

Soils (Map 5)

According to the General Soils Map created by the United States Department of Agriculture for Otsego County, Oneonta's soils are mainly categorized as Chenango (CnB & ChB) and Udorthents (Ue). These types of soils are found predominantly in the southern half of the City. Chenango soils are located throughout central and southern New York, northern New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and northeastern Ohio. Bedrock is typically greater than 60 inches deep in these soils. Udorthents consist of areas from which soil has been excavated. The original soil ranges from sand and gravel to fine sandy loam. Both of these soils are generally deep, sandy and well drained with slopes of 3-8 percent.

Other soils types in the City include Bath, Lackawanna, Lordstown, and Oquaga, which are also all moderately well drained soils. A wide variety of soils are found in the northern section of the City as seen on the map at left.

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City Soils Classification

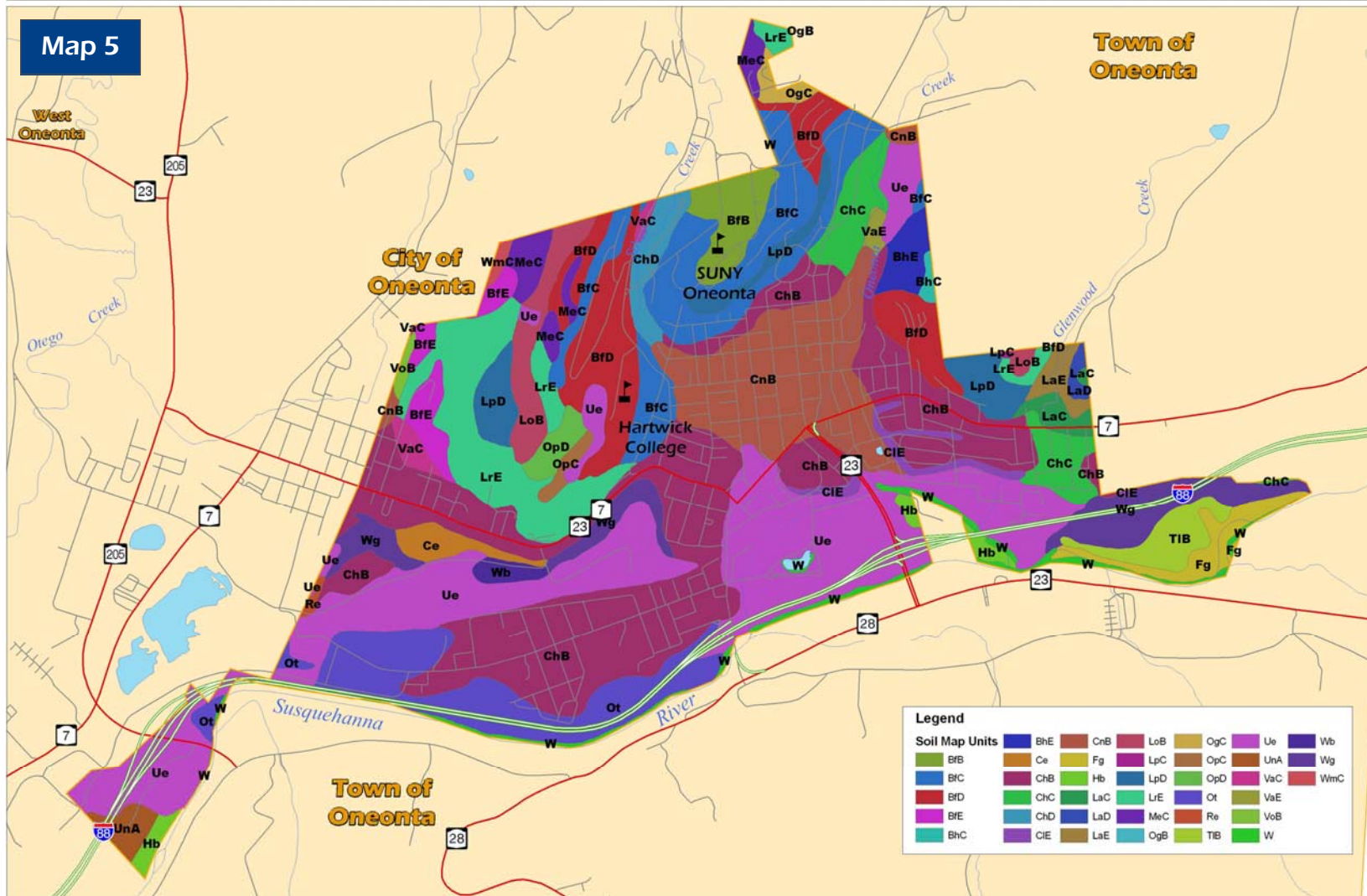


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Map 5





Community Services

COMMUNITY SERVICES

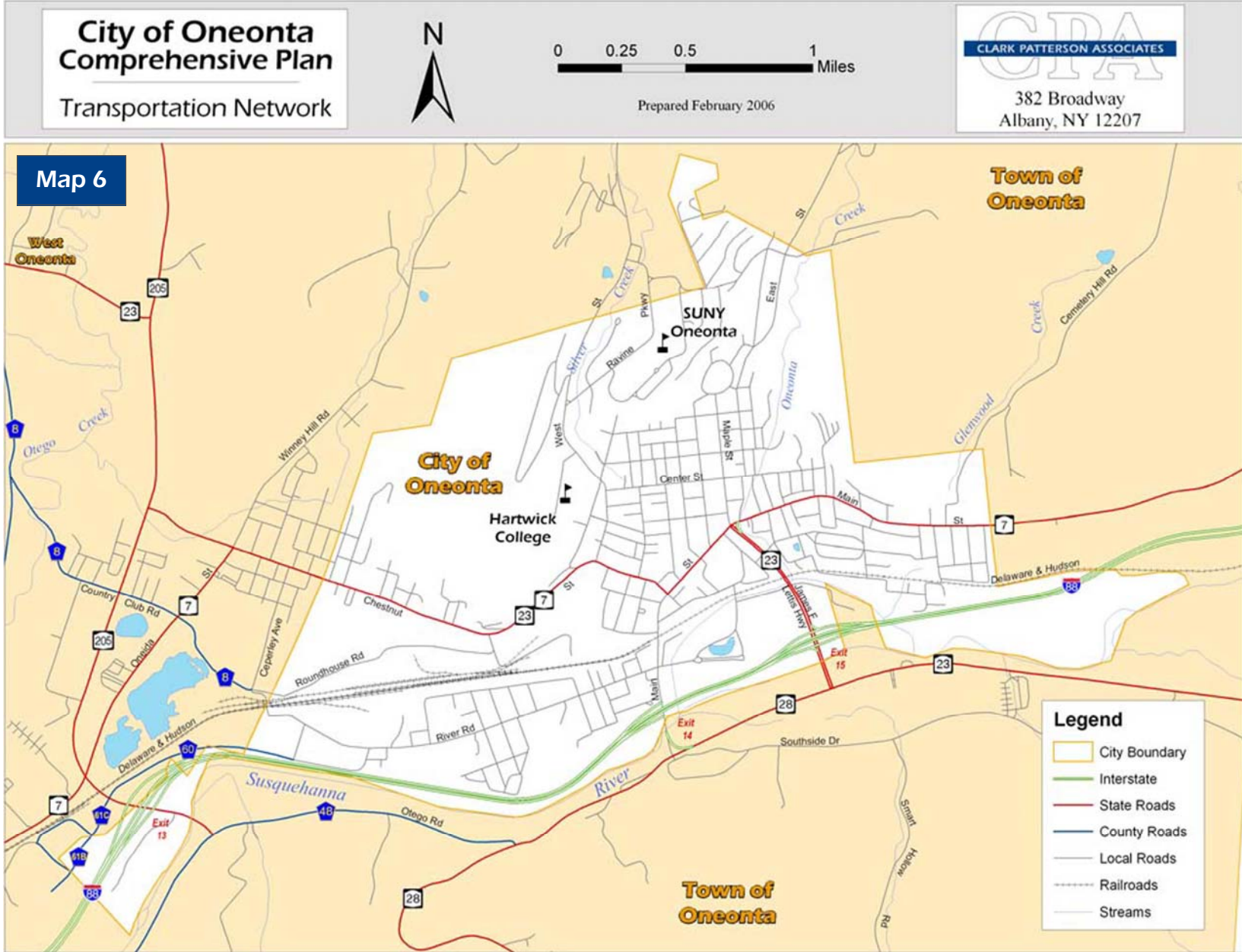
Transportation Network (Map 6)

Since the primary mode of transportation in Oneonta is the automobile, the City maintains a well-organized road network. The City's modified grid pattern street system is compatible with its urban character and is generally located in areas of level land. A linear street grid provides motorists and pedestrians with many possible paths to reach their destinations.

Oneonta's road network is owned and maintained at four municipal levels: city, county, state, and federal. Examples of City roads include Center Street and Maple Street, which are the main east-west and north-south routes through the interior City, respectively. SR 7 and 23, which run primarily east-west through the City and owned and maintained by the State. County roads include those outside of the City limits such as CR-8, which changes to Roundhouse Road in the City and CR-48 south of Oneonta. Interstate 88 runs almost parallel to the Susquehanna River in the southern portion of the City and connects Oneonta to towns to the east and west. Three interstate exits allow access into the City.

There are also three functional categories of roads in Oneonta, including:

- **Highways:** These roadways provide fast access into and out of a municipality, typically characterized by limited access. Interstate 88 is an example of a highway in this area.
- **Arterials:** These roadways are designed to accommodate both through traffic and access to residential and commercial uses. Routes 7 and 23 are the major routes through the City, with connections to SR-28 and 205 located south and west of Oneonta, respectively.
- **Major Access:** These roadways generally accommodate traffic from residential and commercial areas and direct it to arterials. Center Street, Maple Street, parts of Main Street, and West Street are included in this category.





Community Services

In addition to automobile access, the City is also serviced by Oneonta Public Transit and Otsego Express. Oneonta Public Transit maintains 5 bus routes as well as shuttle busses for SUNY Oneonta and Hartwick College. The Delaware and Hudson rail line is a tertiary system located near the southern boundary of the City, although currently for freight shipment only.

Community Services (Map 7)

Police, Fire, Ambulance Facilities: The City's police and fire departments are located at the Public Safety Building, 81 Main Street. The fire department includes paid full- and part-time staff and cover an area radius of approximately 14 miles which includes the City and Town of Oneonta. In addition to responding to fire emergencies, the department also responds to advanced life and basic life support medical emergencies. The department also works with other volunteer and commercial medical crews from surrounding towns.

SUNY Oneonta has its own University Police Department as well as a basic life support medical emergency department.

The A.O. Fox Hospital, located on Main Street, is the primary healthcare facility for the residents of Oneonta and the four surrounding counties. Fox has 258 acute care beds and a nursing home with 24 hour physician care, in addition to a staffed emergency department, surgical services, and maternity unit.

Bassett Healthcare is a secondary facility that provides primary and secondary medical care to the region. The health care center is located at 125 Main Street.

Education: The Oneonta City School District maintains six City schools. In 2004, the district had 2,110 students enrolled in grades K-12 along with 292 teachers and other staff members. The schools include Oneonta Middle School/High School and Greater Plains, Riverside, Center Street and Valleyview Elementary Schools.



Community Services

Other schools and educational centers include St. Mary's School, Oneonta Community Christian School, the Opportunities for Otsego center, and Otsego area BOCES.

SUNY Oneonta has approximately 5,500 undergraduate students enrolled on a 250 acres campus in the northern section of the City. Oneonta offers over 50 undergraduate and 20 graduate fields of study. Situated on a 375 acre hillside is Hartwick College. Enrolling 1,500 students and employing full- and part-time staff of approximately 400, the school offers 30 undergraduate degree programs.

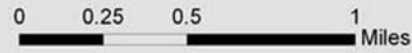
Parks: The City owns and maintains 130 acres of parkland. Wilber Park, located east of SUNY Oneonta, is approximately 56 acres and Neahwa Park, an area of 65 acres, is located in the southern portion of the City, just north of I-88. Both parks contain passive and active recreational facilities. Various youth programs are sponsored by the City, as well as non-City organizations such as the YMCA, Boy and Girl Scouts, and the Oneonta Boys and Girls Club.



City of Oneonta, NY
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City of Oneonta
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Community Services

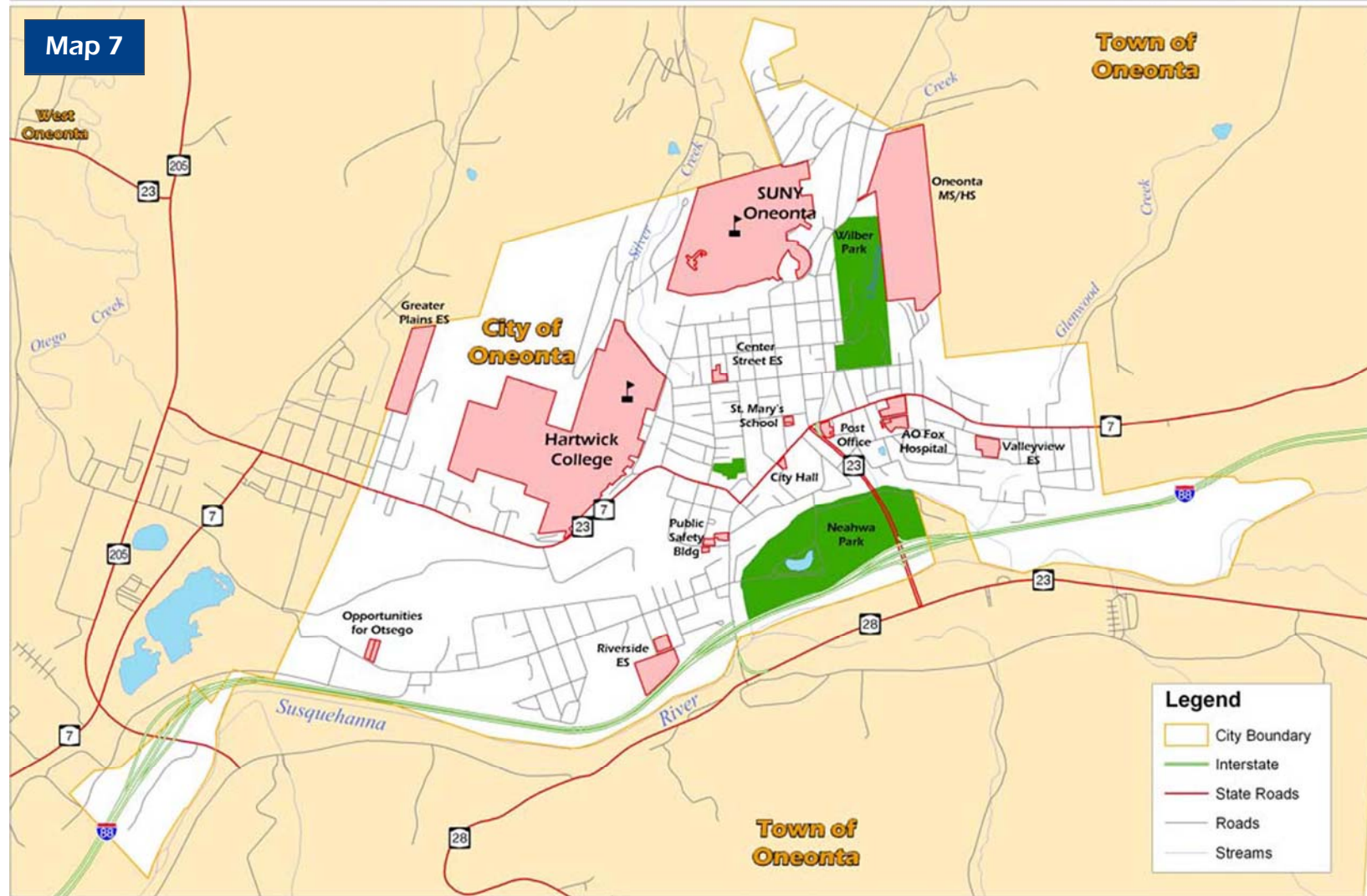


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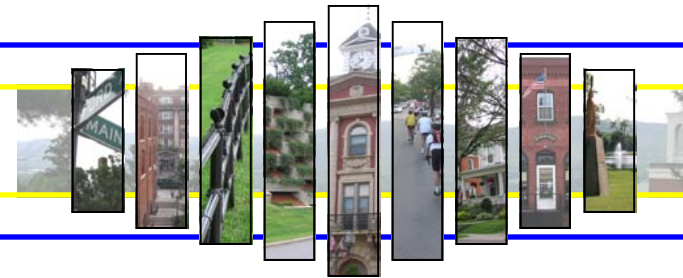
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Map 7





Chapter 3 -



Policy &
Implementation



Overview

OVERVIEW

A good comprehensive plan builds upon a framework that ties broad ideas and specific activities together, identifying the community's short- and long-term needs. Effective policies that will guide community investment and decision making in the City of Oneonta over the next decade often require a multi-level approach. The Plan's framework is very much like the blueprint of a building. All of the components—from the largest to the smallest—must fit together in a logical way for the structure to stand and function well for years to come. This document is the base upon which the community's future direction, development and success will be built.

The City of Oneonta Comprehensive Plan has four key elements, which are described below. In addition, non-planning examples have been provided on the next page to help illustrate how these elements relate to one another.

Community Vision Statement — A general statement about the future condition or state of the community; it is the end toward which all actions are aimed. Oneonta's Community Vision Statement can be found on page 15.

Policy Statement — Similar to a vision in that it is an end toward which actions are aimed, policies are more narrow in scope and tend to target a specific area or topic. Imagine what the community should "have" or "be".

Objective — A statement of measurable activity to be accomplished in pursuit of the policy, which is reasonably attainable. Consider broad actions or aspirations, such as "increase," "develop," or "preserve."

Action Item — A specific proposal to do something that relates directly to accomplishing an objective, which usually takes the form of a plan, activity, project or program.

Beyond the overall Vision for the City of Oneonta, this Plan outlines Policies, Objectives, and Action Items for five specific areas of concern: Destination and Image, Economic Health and Revitalization, Quality of Life, Downtown, and Administration and Government.



Overview

Once the policies, objectives, and action items were fully developed, the Steering Committee devoted additional attention to prioritizing the action items. Each action item was designated as either short-term (0-2 years), mid-term (3-5 years), long-term (6+ years), or ongoing. These time frames provide some organization to the more than 100 action items.

Once each item was categorized by time frame, each Steering Committee member ranked all of the *short-term* items as either high-priority, medium-priority, or low-priority. The average of all the rankings was used to generate a prioritized list.

The benefit of this process was twofold. First, it provides an additional level of hierarchy to the action items. Second, it gives the community several action items that it should address immediately. In fact, some of the initiatives included on the list were already underway at the time of plan adoption, as shown on the following pages.

This chapter is broken down into three sections:

- Key Action Items, Completed and Underway
- High-Priority Action Items (as identified by the process described above)
- Complete list of Policies, Objectives, and Action Items, broken down into five policy areas. **Action items shown in maroon are considered high-priorities and are repeated in the preceding section.** Each action item page has a status column, which allows this document to be used as a workbook to monitor progress.

As an alternative approach to organizing the Action Items, specific items related to special interest areas are repeated on separate pages. These areas are:

- Oneonta as an Arts & Cultural Destination - page 86
- Relationship Between the City and Colleges - page 89

How Do The Policy Elements Fit Together?

The following non-planning example helps to illustrate how each of these key items relate to one another.

Example:

Vision Statement — To raise a healthy and close-knit family.

Policy — To have a well educated child.

Objective — Increase my child's vocabulary.

Action Item — Introduce one new word per week, repeating it three to five times a day.



Key Action Items, Completed & Underway

KEY ACTION ITEMS, COMPLETED & UNDERWAY

While this chapter of the Plan outlines the key policies, objectives, and action items recommended for the City of Oneonta, it is important to recognize the initiatives that are either completed or are underway as a result of the community embarking on the comprehensive planning process. The following is a list of select initiatives that demonstrate Oneonta's commitment to enhancing the physical infrastructure and general quality of life in the community.

Action Items	Status
PUBLIC SECTOR INITIATIVES	
• Secured a Small Cities Façade Grant to improve the appearance of downtown structures	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Included a small sum for arts and cultural programming in the 2007 budget	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Working to improve the appearance of the Lettis Highway entrance to the city	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Established window displays in a number of vacant store fronts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Developed www.visitoneonta.com , to be launched in early 2007	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Awarded a contract for installing wayfinding signage at various sites throughout the city	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Creation of a downtown/outdoor dining ordinance to be considered by the Common Council's IGA Committee	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Reactivated the Youth Employment Program	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Introduced an environmental initiative including the use of B-20 biodiesel fuel in the City's fleet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Established a teen center in conjunction with OCAY in the Asa Allison Municipal Building (aka the Armory)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Adoption of the 2007 budget by Common Council with a small reduction in the tax levy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



Key Action Items, Completed and Underway

Action Items

- Adoption of a more stringent Season Rental Ordinance by Common Council
- Adoption of a Special Use Permit process for fraternities and sororities by Common Council
- Applied zoning changes to parcels on East Street and River Street to encourage housing development

PRIVATE SECTOR, NON-PROFIT AND COLLEGIATE INITIATIVES

- Addition of a new restaurant on Main Street
- Addition of a new book store in Clinton Plaza
- Addition of a Dollar General Store on Chestnut Street
- Addition of a new clothing store in Clinton Plaza
- Other commercial vacancies in the downtown area filled
- Inaugural O-H Fest which attracted a few thousand visitors to the downtown area and to concerts in Neahwa Park
- Expanded the Hampton Inn on River Street
- Established a 5K race as part of the Pit Run
- Foothills Performing Arts Center began to sponsor events and activities in their Market Street building
- Opened the Greater Oneonta Historical Society building on Main Street
- Made available some wireless internet connectivity in the downtown area

Status





High-Priority Action Items

HIGH-PRIORITY ACTION ITEMS

Status

The following is a list of action items that the Steering Committee identified as high-priority activities to be addressed immediately. The items were selected directly from the comprehensive list that begins on page 56 (**shown in maroon to add emphasis**). Some of these items were underway at the time of plan adoption. The items shown below are grouped by policy area and are in no particular order.

Destination & Image

- 1) Work with city officials and local leaders to identify constraints to achieving the desired image of the community and ways to enhance the image within each of their areas of expertise. Examples would include:
 - Recreation Office—Offer more programs focused on the 12-18 year old group.
 - Police—Increase bike or walking patrols in the City.
 - Department of Public Works—Enhance Gateway area appearances with plantings and better maintenance.
 - Community Development—Develop an annual grant application calendar for various programs that are needed to support local businesses and enhance the urban infrastructure of the community.
- 2) Develop and promote a “Business Basics” package that advocates for attractive and accessible storefronts and improves the public spaces immediately adjacent to these businesses.
- 3) Encourage the colleges to provide general neighborhood consideration policies to landlords where student housing is located in or near predominantly non-student neighborhoods.
- 4) Create a precise area plan for gateway and wayfinding signage that will enhance the city’s image as well as promote and direct people to important destinations.



High-Priority Action Items

Status

Economic Health & Revitalization

- 1) Develop and implement a wayfinding signage program that will identify available on- and off-street parking locations in walking distance of the downtown.
- 2) Develop two committees, one for tourism and one for environmental technology that will define a mission statement, approach and process for attracting businesses in each market sector.
- 3) Work with the City's Downtown Developer to aggressively pursue the attraction of businesses that fill significant gaps in desired products and services. These may include small-scale grocery/convenience stores, clothing stores, tourism-based retail (sports, arts, entertainment, collegiate, etc.), and boutique/gift shops. A detailed inventory of potential properties for infill development will be necessary for this endeavor.
- 4) Identify specific sites for infill development and apply for a Technical Assistance Grant through the Governor's Office for Small Cities.

Quality of Life

- 1) Revise the City's zoning ordinance to reflect the vision expressed in this Plan.
- 2) Revise City codes to reflect yard set-backs, housing types and sizes reflective of the diversity and scale necessary to create an approved vision of neighborhoods. Utilize the results of the Preferred Development Survey to aid in codifying design standards for inclusion in an updated zoning ordinance.
- 3) Adjust the intersections of pedestrian, bicycle and motorized traffic – especially in heavily-traveled areas – to ensure the safety of each of these modes of transportation.



High-Priority Action Items

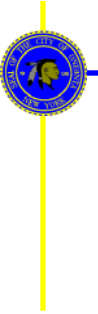
Downtown

- 1) Offer incentives for Downtown building owners to update their structures to meet or exceed modern codes and occupant needs (e.g. elevators, electrical and communications wiring).

Administration & Government

- 1) Convene a Charter Review Commission with the goal of clarifying the level of accountability within and between the branches of City government. The charge to such a commission may include: examining the city's charter in an effort to give greater precision to the duties, responsibilities and powers of the city's common council, boards, commission and mayor.
- 2) Improve the documentation and communication of roles and responsibilities given to various City officials and committees.
- 3) Revise the responsibilities of the City's Downtown Developer position to reflect the updated vision and policies found in this Plan, including a more involved relationship with local businesses and commercial landlords. Select actions of the Downtown Developer should be communicated to the public to raise awareness of completed, current, and proposed projects.
- 4) Contract for continued sharing of services or additional cooperation of such with the Town of Oneonta.
- 5) Create a direct liaison between the City and Town who will attend regular meetings of important community leaders.

Status



Policy Area - Destination & Image

It is the City's policy to establish Oneonta as a regional and national destination, expanding and promoting our various assets including higher education institutions, scenic beauty, the arts and cultural community, urban parks, and excellent quality of life. Residents, businesses, and community leaders will work together to make Oneonta a more attractive place, especially in downtown and at the gateways to the city. We will encourage the support of local businesses and work to attract new businesses that will enhance our image as a unique destination. We will play a supporting role to regional assets including sports, scenic beauty, recreation and shopping and commercial destinations.

Objectives

- 1) Ensure that Oneonta has a clearly-defined image that is effectively marketed.
- 2) Improve tourism coordination and information sharing opportunities among local and regional partners.
- 3) Increase collaboration among local businesses to attract patrons.
- 4) Improve the relationship between the colleges and the community, enhancing positive impacts and reducing negative impacts.
- 5) Improve the aesthetics and functionality of the city's gateways, including Main Street intersections and I-88 connectors.
- 6) Poise the city to offer a variety of residential and, where applicable, occupational opportunities to people seeking to relocate or return to the region.
- 7) Ensure that Oneonta remains a safe community for families to live, businesses to locate, and visitors to feel welcome.



Policy Area - Destination & Image

Action Items

Status

1) *Ensure that Oneonta has a clearly-defined image that is effectively marketed.*

SHORT-TERM (0 - 2 YEARS)

- A) Consider the organization of a committee to focus specifically on defining the perceived and actual image of the City at the local, meso and macro regional level and then define opportunities to enhance, brand and market the desired image of the community.
- B) *Work with city officials and local leaders to identify constraints to achieving the desired image of the community and ways to enhance the image within each of their areas of expertise.*

Examples would include:

- Recreation Office—Offer more programs focused on the 12-18 year old group and for seniors.*
- Police—Increase bike or walking patrols in the City.*
- Department of Public Works—Enhance Gateway area appearances with plantings and better maintenance.*
- Community Development—Develop an annual grant application calendar for various programs that are needed to support local businesses and enhance the urban infrastructure of the community.*

- C) Work with Otsego County Tourism to contract with a firm that will promote tourism in the city. The firm should work on “branding” the community, a campaign aimed at solidifying Oneonta’s marketable identity.

MID-TERM (3 - 5 YEARS)

- D) Work with the colleges to jointly market the desired image of the community.



Policy Area - Destination & Image

Action Items

Status

2) *Improve tourism coordination and information sharing opportunities among local and regional partners.*

MID-TERM (3 - 5 YEARS)

- A) Develop a collaborative tourism promotion effort among all interested organizations committed to encouraging and developing tourism.
- B) Examine the possibility of creating an Arts and Cultural Affairs office.

3) *Increase collaboration among local businesses to attract patrons.*

SHORT-TERM (0 - 2 YEARS)

- A) **Develop and promote a "Business Basics" package that advocates for attractive and accessible storefronts and improves the public spaces immediately adjacent to these businesses.**
- B) Work with businesses owners to examine opportunities for advertising in local media outlets to promote downtown businesses.
- C) Work with business owners to identify specific days where stores will keep common business hours to encourage multi-trip shopping and evening street life.

ONGOING

- D) Work with the Tourism Committee (see Economic Health and Revitalization 2(B)) to encourage events and festivals in the downtown area.



Policy Area - Destination & Image

Action Items

Status

- 4) *Improve the relationship between the colleges and the community, enhancing positive impacts and reducing negative impacts.*

SHORT-TERM (0 - 2 YEARS)

- A) Increase college student population involvement in the beautification (neighborhood clean-ups, public art, etc.) and promotion of the city.
- B) **Encourage the colleges to provide general neighborhood consideration policies to landlords where student housing is located in or near predominantly non-student neighborhoods.**
- C) Engage the Greek community at both colleges to develop more aggressive community service programs in order to mitigate certain negative perceptions associated with college students.
- D) Establish connections between the colleges and city high schools such as mentoring programs and encouraging high school students to take college courses.
- E) Establish a stronger outreach effort to the colleges to educate students about local government issues and encourage their participation.

MID-TERM (3 - 5 YEARS)

- F) Consider locating appropriate student services in the downtown area, such as a bookstore or other services.
- G) Secure funding to support additional police positions to patrol neighborhoods and downtown areas.
- H) Create a team comprised of city and college representatives that will meet regularly to encourage open dialogue and to share ideas for problem solving.

ONGOING

- I) Continue to work with the colleges to define marketing, economic and implementation partnerships that will enhance the image of the city.



Policy Area - Destination & Image

Action Items

Status

- 5) *Improve the aesthetics and functionality of the city's gateways, including Main Street intersections and I-88 connectors.*

SHORT-TERM (0 - 2 YEARS)

- A) *Create a precise area plan for gateway and wayfinding signage that will enhance the city's image as well as promote and direct people to important destinations.*
- B) Determine if there is interest locally, possibly with a mix of year round residents and students, to form a Gateway and Corridor Enhancement Club that will work with the DPW to plant and maintain all vegetation at gateways and primary corridors in the City of Oneonta.
- C) Enable the Civic Beautification Committee to carry out relevant action items in this Plan.

MID-TERM (3 - 5 YEARS)

- D) Develop a Gateway Overlay District that will ensure development and property maintenance meets the recommendations of the precise area plan defined in (A) above.
- E) Ensure the DPW (see (B) above) is involved and managing all maintenance and beautification efforts associated with gateway enhancement.
- F) Redesign gateway corridors, especially the Main Street and James Lettis connections from I-88, to be safer and more appealing for pedestrians.

LONG-TERM (6+ YEARS)

- G) Perform a cost-benefit analysis for placing utilities underground along gateway corridors, considering qualitative factors as well as quantitative.



Policy Area - Destination & Image

Action Items

Status

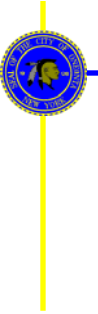
- 6) *Encourage the city to offer a variety of residential and, where applicable, occupational opportunities to people seeking to relocate or return to the region.*

SHORT-TERM (0 - 2 YEARS)

- A) Develop a committee to define a mission, approach and process for assisting families and individuals looking to relocate or return to the region.
- B) Using an Industrial Development Agency (IDA) or a Local Development Corporation (LDC), identify and maintain a list of structures in the downtown area that may be suitable for live-work opportunities for small business owners.

MID-TERM (3 - 5 YEARS)

- C) Develop a revolving loan and small grant pool to be used for small business owners who want to locate in Oneonta to help purchase and renovate a structure identified in (B) above or to provide business development assistance.
- D) Continue and strengthen the existing revolving loan and small grant program for façade improvements and rent subsidies.
- E) Develop a “Come Home to Oneonta” website and promotional campaign directed to both desired business sectors as well as youth who have moved from the area but would like to come back. Identify the programs and opportunities available as defined by the committee (A) above.



Formation of a Local Development Corporation

Overview

A Local Development Corporation (LDC) is a not-for-profit corporation created to benefit a municipality, county or region. In an urban context, LDCs are often established to focus on specific areas, such as a downtown, a waterfront area, a commercial corridor, or a specific site with redevelopment potential. The corporation is empowered by the New York State Department of State to establish programs that promote economic development. These programs are typically established for a variety of purposes such as attracting new business and industry, making physical improvements, retaining existing businesses, and administering loans.

Steps Required for Creating an LDC

- Draft a form for a certificate for incorporation pursuant to New York State Non-for-profit Corporation Law section 1411.
- File a certificate of incorporation, entitled with the corporation name and signed by each incorporator, with the Department of State. The certificate should include the following information:
 1. The name of the corporation.
 2. Statement that the corporation is a corporation as defined in section 102 (definitions) subparagraph (a)(5) of the Non-for-profit Corporation Law; statement of the purpose for the formation of the type of corporation. Because a local development corporation is a Type C corporation, state the lawful public or quasi-public objective which each business purpose will achieve.
 3. The name of the county and state which the office of the corporation will be located.
 4. The names and addresses of the initial directors.
 5. The duration of the corporation if other than perpetual.
 6. A designation of the Secretary of State as agent of the corporation upon whom process against it may be served and the post office address within or without this state to which the Secretary or State shall mail a copy of any process against it served upon him.
 7. If the corporation is to have a registered agent his name and address within this state and a statement that the registered agent is to be the agent of the corporation upon whom process against it may be served.
 8. Additional statements required under section 1411.



Formation of a Business Improvement District

Overview

Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) are districts within municipalities defined by state and local legislation in which the private sector delivers services for revitalization beyond what the local government can reasonably be expected to provide. The properties and/or businesses within this legally constituted district pay a special tax or assessment to cover the cost of providing facilities or services for which the district has a particular need. The benefits are that while the municipality provides some oversight authority, the BIDs control the purse strings.

While state and local legal requirements vary, the creation of special districts involving extra fees usually requires some form of prior approval by a simple majority of district property owners, by owners who control a majority of the land area, or by owners responsible for the majority of the fees assessed. Landowners involved in special assessment district financing may be residents desiring infrastructure improvements, developers interested in preparing property for major projects, or commercial businesses helping to fund improvements that will enhance local economic activity.

Special assessment districts can be independent of local government, having almost complete autonomy to finance, construct and manage specific projects. They can also be dependent on local government, created only to raise revenue for specific projects, which are administered and implemented by local government.

Typical Actions of a BID

- Coordinate public art contests/commissions, holiday and festival decorating, installation of banners or other aesthetic themes
- Initiate services not provided by public agencies such as maintenance, cleaning and snow removal, marketing, promotion, business retention and recruitment
- Advocate on behalf of local business allowing them to communicate a unified vision/message that presses local government on issues that would aid the district's revitalization



Formation of a Business Improvement District

- Foster cooperation among competitive businesses which allows them to engage in activities that they would not be able to do on their own.
- General financing for capital improvements such as the installation and maintenance of street furniture, waste receptacles, public restrooms, planters, landscaping, parking, etc.
- Manage a Visitor Center/Information Booth

Steps to Required to Establish a BID

New York State General Municipal Law, Article 19A, provides the necessary steps for the formation of a BID. These steps include:

- Create a district plan, including the purpose of the BID, organizational structure, desired improvements to pursue, a financial plan, and a map of the district
- Draft of a resolution by the City authorizing the district plan
- File the district plan with the City Clerk and hold a public hearing to adopt its establishment as a local law
- Begin implementing strategies for tax/fee collection and district improvements

For more information, visit <http://public.leginfo.state.ny.us/menugetf.cgi> and search for General Municipal Law, Article 19A.



Policy Area - Destination & Image

Action Items

Status

7) *Ensure that Oneonta remains a safe community for families to live, businesses to locate, and visitors to feel welcome.*

SHORT-TERM (0 - 2 YEARS)

- A) Consider the development of a City Neighborhood Action Plan program to be facilitated by the Department of Community Development that will develop a strategy for addressing each neighborhood's concerns and define strategies for enhancement.
- B) Create an annual event that celebrates the public safety community (City Police Department, City Fire Department, Campus Police, etc.) and increases their interaction with the general public.

MID-TERM (3 - 5 YEARS)

- C) Sponsor a neighborhood beautification program with an award provided by the City or an outside sponsor to the most improved annually.
- D) Improve foot and bicycle police patrol of neighborhoods and the downtown area (see 4(G) above).



Policy Area - Economic Health & Revitalization

It is the policy of Oneonta to support existing businesses and encourage the attraction of additional businesses that meet the needs of residents and visitors. The economic vitality of the community depends on having locally supported businesses that offer the goods and services community members need and want. Future commercial and residential development must respect the scale and character of this traditional small city. The community recognizes that much of the perceived and actual economic health of the city revolves around the condition of Downtown. Oneonta will build upon existing assets and growing economic sectors such as environmentally conscious, or “green” technologies, recreational tourism, and arts and culture.

Objectives

- 1) Support the vitality and sustainability of existing businesses.
- 2) Attract additional businesses to the city that reflect the city’s vision for its future.
- 3) Increase the variety and affordability of housing choices for all ages and incomes.
- 4) Ensure complementary design of new commercial, industrial, and residential developments.
- 5) Encourage infill development in commercial and industrial areas.
- 6) Facilitate the growth of the environmentally conscious, or “green” technology sector of the economy.
- 7) Facilitate the installation of new and enhanced communications infrastructure.
- 8) Ensure that municipal services and infrastructure can accommodate future growth.



Policy Area - Economic Health & Revitalization

Action Items

Status

- 1) *Support the vitality and sustainability of existing businesses.*

SHORT-TERM (0 - 2 YEARS)

- A) Work with local merchants, residents, and visitors to define a desired theme or underserved niche that can be actively pursued and ultimately served by the downtown area merchants of Oneonta.
- B) Catalog the availability and type of goods and services currently offered in the city, as well as what is desired by residents and visitors.
- C) Identify which desired goods or services could be provided by an existing merchant and which would require a new business. Work with the existing merchants who could modify their business model with limited investment to address the gaps in goods and services (see also 2(C) below). Training and/or tax incentives should be considered to aid the economic restructuring.
- D) **Develop and implement a wayfinding signage program that will identify available on- and off-street parking locations in walking distance of the downtown.**

MID-TERM (3 - 5 YEARS)

- E) Support efforts to create an Oneonta Chamber of Commerce. Part of their mission would include aggressively promoting downtown businesses and attractions to the sports tourism sector of the visitor population. For example, the Chamber could work with local sports camps to offer package deals to visiting families that would include a hotel room, meals, a Tigers game and/or an evening performance in addition to camp attendance.
- F) Identify essential neighborhood business districts on Chestnut and River Streets and obtain a Governor's Office for Small Cities Technical Assistance Grant that will fund a precise area revitalization plan for each area.



Policy Area - Economic Health & Revitalization

Action Items

Status

ONGOING

- G) Encourage the restoration and use of upper stories for residential purposes. This will increase the potential patronage of businesses and reduce loitering and crime concerns. Grant resources such as Restore New York, the NYS Main Street Program and the Governor's Office for Small Cities Comprehensive Grant should be considered on an annual basis to offset costs for the business or building owner.
- H) Have festivals and events downtown prior to and after events at the Foothills Performing Arts Center, the colleges, etc.

2) *Attract additional businesses to the city that reflect the city's vision for its future.*

SHORT-TERM (0 - 2 YEARS)

- A) Create and maintain an inventory of economic activity and diversity within the city to track over time toward reaching a vision of the city's economic future.
- B) Develop two committees, one for tourism and one for environmental technology that will define a mission statement, approach and process for attracting businesses in each market sector.
- C) Work with the City's Downtown Developer to aggressively pursue the attraction of businesses that fill significant gaps in desired products and services (see 1(C) above). These may include small-scale grocery/convenience stores, clothing stores, tourism-based retail (sports, arts, entertainment, collegiate, etc.), and boutique/gift shops. A detailed inventory of potential properties for infill development will be necessary for this endeavor.



Policy Area - Economic Health & Revitalization

Action Items

Status

LONG-TERM (6+ YEARS)

- D) Develop a partnership between the City, County, State and the colleges to plan, design, build and staff a business incubator space for green technologies (see also Objective 6).

ONGOING

- E) Work with the local colleges to understand the student population needs and develop strategies for locating appropriate businesses in the downtown area of the city.

- 3) *Increase the variety and affordability of housing choices for all ages and incomes.*

SHORT-TERM (0 - 2 YEARS)

- A) Utilize the *Vacant Land Evaluation (2005)* report to identify and rank key infill parcels and locations that can be utilized for new housing construction.
- B) Complete a senior housing market study to define the income patterns, housing and service requirements within Oneonta and surrounding communities. Provide this study to developers to encourage senior housing options.
- C) Identify the housing needs and desires of college students and lower and middle income populations to determine if the supply is adequate.

MID-TERM (3 - 5 YEARS)

- D) Maintain an up-to-date inventory of housing stock and selected descriptors to create an accurate picture of housing options that will show trends in availability and affordability, among other traits.
- E) Consider acquiring specific houses in dilapidated areas for restoration and resale at affordable prices.



Policy Area - Economic Health & Revitalization

Action Items

Status

LONG-TERM (6+ YEARS)

- F) Consider acquiring key residential development parcels and consolidating them into one developer solicitation to increase the attractiveness and profitability of building new housing downtown.

ONGOING

- G) Encourage the restoration of existing housing stock and the preservation of residential neighborhoods, through revolving loans and small grant programs, whenever possible in existing neighborhoods and the downtown area.
- H) Increase the availability of affordable housing in the City by continuing the First-Time Homeownership Project.

- 4) *Ensure complementary design of new commercial, industrial, and residential developments.*

SHORT-TERM (0 - 2 YEARS)

- A) Develop design standards for all mixed-use and transitional areas within Oneonta, defined specifically for each area.
- B) Update the City Zoning Code to reflect design recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan.

MID-TERM (3 - 5 YEARS)

- C) Consider the development of a point-based review process to ensure consistency in review by all boards.

ONGOING

- D) Always take into account adjacent and surrounding uses when considering the compatibility of a proposed development.



Policy Area - Economic Health & Revitalization

Action Items

Status

5) *Encourage infill development, or redevelopment of vacant or dilapidated properties, in commercial and industrial areas.*

SHORT-TERM (0 - 2 YEARS)

A) *Identify specific sites for infill development and apply for a Technical Assistance Grant through the Governor's Office for Small Cities.*

MID-TERM (3 - 5 YEARS)

B) *Similar to 3(E) above, consider the acquisition of key commercial and industrial parcels through the use of an LDC or IDA in order to make development options more attractive and profitable.*

6) *Facilitate the growth of the environmentally conscious, or "green" technology sector of the economy.*

SHORT-TERM (0 - 2 YEARS)

A) *Work with the colleges to define feasible green technology sectors to focus recruitment and research and development efforts.*

B) *Strive to develop partnerships with other green technology research centers throughout the SUNY system that can assist with Oneonta's development as a research and development center.*

MID-TERM (3 - 5 YEARS)

C) *Identify the necessary size, location and needed services required to develop a business incubator for green technologies (see 2(B&D) above). Redevelopment of the former Delaware and Hudson railyards should be specifically examined as a potential site.*



Policy Area - Economic Health & Revitalization

Action Items

Status

7) *Facilitate the installation of new and enhanced communications infrastructure.*

SHORT-TERM (0 - 2 YEARS)

A) Consider the feasibility of making the downtown or the entire city a wi/fi center where internet access would be free to residents and business owners.

MID-TERM (3 - 5 YEARS)

B) Enhance telecommunications infrastructure by adding new service connections, such as wireless connectivity, and increasing redundancies.

ONGOING

C) Ensure all road reconstruction projects include the installation of updated communication conduits.

8) *Ensure that municipal services and infrastructure can accommodate future growth.*

SHORT-TERM (0 - 2 YEARS)

A) Identify and rank municipal infrastructure conditions and whether or not operations and maintenance costs could be reduced through capital expenditures.

B) Identify if surplus waste water treatment capacity or potable water capacity is available and identify if selling surplus capacity to surrounding municipalities is feasible.

C) Establish a committee to develop City policies on sustainable energy practices.



Policy Area - Economic Health & Revitalization

Action Items

Status

MID-TERM (3 - 5 YEARS)

- D) Develop a Capital Improvements Plan with a Five Year projected period that outlines all required municipal improvements, how it will be funded and responsible department.
- E) Analyze community priorities for goods, services, and other needs to definitively outline the issues in which people would support public sector investment. See questions B and C of Part I of the Community Survey for additional direction.

ONGOING

- F) Ensure the City is submitting grant applications to all relevant agencies annually to help defray the costs associated with infrastructure improvement.



Policy Area - Quality of Life

It is the City's policy to ensure that Oneonta is a premier city in New York State where people desire to live and raise a family, and have ample employment opportunities. Quality of life in Oneonta consists of multiple indicators, including education, the arts, economic stability, public health and safety, social networks, environmental quality, public services, adequate infrastructure, healthy neighborhoods, and recreational opportunities. Each of these areas must be addressed in order to attract and retain residents, businesses, and tourists. The community will work together in the spirit of civic responsibility to ensure that every citizen, every business, and every visitor will have an enriching experience in the City of Oneonta.

Objectives

- 1) Ensure that City codes and incentives encourage residential, commercial, and industrial development consistent with the character of this traditional small city.
- 2) Encourage alternative modes of transportation, including walking, biking, and public transit.
- 3) Improve/expand social and recreational opportunities for various age groups.
- 4) Strengthen partnerships with community not-for-profits and other organizations to improve quality of life (housing, youth services, employment and support services).



Policy Area - Quality of Life

Action Items

Status

- 1) *Ensure that City codes and incentives encourage residential, commercial, and industrial development consistent with the character of this traditional small city.*

SHORT-TERM (0 - 2 YEARS)

- A) *Revise the City's zoning ordinance to reflect the vision expressed in this Plan.*
 - B) *Revise City codes to reflect yard set-backs, housing types and sizes reflective of the diversity and scale necessary to create an approved vision of neighborhoods. Utilize the results of the Preferred Development Survey to aid in codifying design standards for inclusion in an updated zoning ordinance.*
 - C) *Revise city codes and incentives to allow for development of buildings and other structures that reflect the mixed-use environment desired for downtown.*
 - D) *Revise the zoning ordinance to restrict rental properties, including summer rentals, from the Walnut Street Historic District. Serious consideration should be given to expanding this restriction beyond the historic district to preserve other well established owner-occupied single family neighborhoods.*
 - E) *Encourage construction of sidewalks in new or significantly improved housing developments.*
- 2) *Encourage alternative modes of transportation, including walking, biking, and public transit.*

SHORT-TERM (0 - 2 YEARS)

- A) *Complete the Oneonta Susquehanna Greenway extension between Exits 13 and 14 of I-88, including safe access points.*
- B) *Create a map showing existing and proposed bike routes and walking routes in the city.*
- C) *Develop a plan for specific roadways and corridors to encouraging bicycle use, including dedicated bike lanes, shared use lanes (typically 14-16 feet in width), or wider shoulders.*



Policy Area - Quality of Life

Action Items

Status

- D) Install bicycle racks in commercial areas and at specific destinations.
- E) Identify potential locations for multi-use/recreational/commuter trails.
- F) Identify potential locations for small-scale pedestrian walkways that increase connectivity between different neighborhoods and/or different land uses. Examples may include improved connections between future development in the railroad yards and its surrounding neighborhoods, identifying physical and perceptual barriers between downtown, the riverfront and adjacent residential areas, etc.
- G) *Adjust the intersections of pedestrian, bicycle and motorized traffic – especially in heavily-traveled areas – to ensure the safety of each of these modes of transportation.*

MID-TERM (3 - 5 YEARS)

- H) Initiate planning and design phases for transportation projects identified in E) and F) above. Construction of these facilities may also begin in this time frame.
- I) Improve pedestrian access to the Post Office from all directions by making the streets more pedestrian friendly or moving this service to another downtown location.

LONG-TERM (6+ YEARS)

- J) Complete construction of transportation projects designed in H) above and identify additional routes/facilities to complement the non-motorized transportation network.

ONGOING

- K) Consider implementing a Safe Routes to School Program or “Walking School Bus” to encourage healthier lifestyles and energy savings. See <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/saferoutes> for more information.
- L) Develop and provide adequate resources for a plan to continuously expand, improve, and maintain the City sidewalks.



Policy Area - Quality of Life

Action Items

Status

3) *Improve/expand social and recreational opportunities for various age groups.*

SHORT-TERM (0 - 2 YEARS)

- A) Work with the Chamber of Commerce to develop college student-targeted events that will encourage and highlight the positive aspects of the college-city relationship.
- B) Develop a monthly or seasonal "Seniors Night" in which downtown merchants offer discounts to senior citizens for dining, entertainment, general merchandise, etc. The event could include live music or other attractions and will work to restore confidence and pride in the city among the senior population as well as support downtown businesses.
- C) Fund a feasibility study for an ice arena/sports complex. The complex could house a variety of functions beyond a community ice rink, including a restaurant/bar, pro-shop, and facilities for other indoor sports.

ONGOING

- D) Work with the colleges to develop college student-staffed recreational programs for the city's youth.
- E) Develop a similar program to D) above that engages the senior citizen population.

4) *Strengthen partnerships with community not-for-profits and other organizations to improve quality of life (housing, youth services, employment and support services).*

SHORT-TERM (0 - 2 YEARS)

- A) Create a database of all community not-for-profits related to the goals outlined in this Plan and identify their respective missions and current initiatives. Coordinate this database with similar



Policy Area - Quality of Life

Action Items

City-driven efforts so as to reduce inefficiencies/redundancies and to advocate for the objectives in the Plan. For example, the City may lack the resources to develop affordable housing programs, but they may identify an organization that they could support that is already addressing this issue.

MID-TERM (3 - 5 YEARS)

B) Increase representation and participation in local Workforce Investment Board.

ONGOING

C) Encourage the colleges to hold student events which directly involve community members (concerts, art shows, presentations, lectures, etc.) at off-campus sites.

D) Work with the colleges to establish community service programs (both required credits and volunteer opportunities) such as neighborhood clean-ups, landscaping maintenance, fundraisers, food and clothing drives, etc.

E) Establish a working relationship between the City and local religious representatives to advocate for the achievement of the goals outlined in this Plan.

Status



Policy Area - Downtown

It is the policy of the City of Oneonta to make its defined Downtown a regionally renowned destination and a place that serves the residential, commercial, and civic needs of the community and its visitors. The health and vibrancy of Downtown has a significant impact on the city's image. Residents, businesses, and government will work together to make Downtown clean, safe, and economically viable, encouraging the strength of private businesses and the attractiveness of public spaces. Downtown can and will be a regional center of arts, commerce, recreation, social, and civic activity.

Objectives

- 1) Improve Downtown's ability to complement the commercial, tourism, industrial, and retail areas in the town and the region.
- 2) Ensure new development and redevelopment of land and structures is held to the highest design standards in order to improve aesthetics and enhance the image of the community.
- 3) Preserve the historical significance of Main Street and other historic areas through careful planning and architectural regulations.
- 4) Encourage infill development and redevelopment of strategic sites within downtown, including regional destinations, shopping, and upper story residential units.



Policy Area - Downtown

Action Items

Status

- 1) *Improve Downtown's ability to complement the commercial, tourism, industrial, and retail areas in the town and the region.*

SHORT-TERM (0 - 2 YEARS)

- A) Building on the desire to be an arts and culture center, provide a common space downtown that can be utilized by local artisans and business owners for hands-on projects with customers.
- B) Create a parking plan that includes promotional materials advertising the abundance of parking in downtown. The plan would also identify areas of limited supply and create strategies for meeting demand.

MID-TERM (3 - 5 YEARS)

- C) Develop an overall business plan for Downtown. The plan would identify strategies for successful business development and niche marketing for small-scale merchants.
- D) Work with property owners to beautify the Dietz Street parking lot area.

- 2) *Ensure new development and redevelopment of land and structures is held to the highest design standards in order to improve aesthetics and enhance the image of the community.*

SHORT-TERM (0 - 2 YEARS)

- A) Consider forming a Business Improvement District (BID, see pages 62-63) or a special taxing district that will dedicate a portion of all revenue generated to enhancing the downtown area.



Policy Area - Downtown

Action Items

Status

MID-TERM (3 - 5 YEARS)

- B) Create a Downtown Revitalization Plan to more specifically address physical and functional improvements to downtown.
- C) Create an Architectural Review Board to establish and enforce design standards for building improvements and future development. Design standards should address building materials, scale, relationship to the surrounding environment (buildings, streetscape, public spaces), and appropriate architectural features.
- D) Encourage attractive landscaped buffers at the edges of parking lots and in areas of transition between land uses.
- E) Utilizing the newly formed BID (see 2(A) above), hire an interior designer to consult downtown merchants on storefront improvements, creating a consistent theme of quality, creativity, and inviting spaces.

- 3) *Preserve the historical significance of Main Street and other historic areas through careful planning and architectural regulations.*

SHORT-TERM (0 - 2 YEARS)

- A) Charge the proposed Architectural Review Board (see 2(C) above) to work with existing relevant organizations to advocate for the protection and improvement of historic buildings.
- B) Install interpretive signage that describes the history of significant buildings in downtown.

LONG-TERM (6+ YEARS)

- C) Create a detailed inventory of architecturally and historically significant structures in downtown.



Policy Area - Downtown

Action Items

Status

- 4) *Encourage infill development and redevelopment of strategic sites within downtown, including regional destinations, shopping, and upper story residential units.*

SHORT-TERM (0 - 2 YEARS)

- A) Offer incentives for Downtown building owners to update their structures to meet or exceed modern codes and occupant needs (e.g. elevators, electrical and communications wiring).

MID-TERM (3 - 5 YEARS)

- B) Develop conceptual demonstration sites within downtown that can be used as pilot programs for future public and private investment.

ONGOING

- C) Inventory and track the variety of Downtown commercial, retail, government, professional services and business services entities.



Policy Area - Administration & Government

It is our policy to ensure that the government of the City of Oneonta serves the needs of the community by supplying services that promote quality of life and economic growth. The government should play an active role in administering and implementing the recommendations outlined in this Plan. Implementing this Plan will require strong leadership, more accountability, and greater regional cooperation. It will also lead to gains in efficiency and effectiveness.

Objectives

- 1) Ensure that government structures and procedures are organized in a manner that facilitates the achievement of goals outlined in this Plan.
- 2) Improve the working relationship between government, residents, and businesses.
- 3) Create an environment where civic engagement and community pride are actively promoted.
- 4) Engage the Town of Oneonta and surrounding communities in additional dialogue regarding regional issues and the potential for shared services.



Policy Area - Administration & Government

Status

Action Items

- 1) *Ensure that government structures and procedures are organized in a manner that facilitates the achievement of goals outlined in this Plan.*

SHORT-TERM (0 - 2 YEARS)

- A) *Convene a Charter Review Commission with the goal of clarifying the level of accountability within and between the branches of City government. The charge to such a commission may include: examining the city's charter in an effort to give greater precision to the duties, responsibilities and powers of the city's common council, boards, commission and mayor.*

- 2) *Improve the working relationship between government, residents, and businesses.*

SHORT-TERM (0 - 2 YEARS)

- A) *Improve the documentation and communication of roles and responsibilities given to various City officials and committees.*
- B) *Revise the responsibilities of the City's Downtown Developer position to reflect the updated vision and policies found in this Plan, including a more involved relationship with local businesses and commercial landlords. Select actions of the Downtown Developer should be communicated to the public to raise awareness of completed, current, and proposed projects.*
- C) *Improve the City's ability to communicate the policies, objectives, and strategies expressed in this Plan. For example, the City's website should clearly identify the specific action items that are currently being pursued, along with opportunities for citizen participation that will expedite their completion. These efforts will encourage community involvement and promote government accountability.*
- D) *Ensure that meeting agendas for all board and commission meetings that are open to the public are published on the City's website and are promoted via local media outlets.*



Policy Area - Administration & Government

Action Items

Status

- E) Examine the possibility of adjusting board and commission meetings to more convenient times that encourage greater public participation.

MID-TERM (3 - 5 YEARS)

- F) Create a “Frequently Asked Questions” section on the City’s website, including detailed responses with appropriate contact information for specific concerns.
- G) Evaluate City Ward boundaries according to latest census population figures in order to ensure equality of representation.
- H) Examine the potential for implementing “e-gov” services on the City’s website, such as payments of taxes, fees, STAR program applications, and looking up real property information.

- 3) *Create an environment where civic engagement and community pride are actively promoted.*

SHORT-TERM (0 - 2 YEARS)

- A) Create a “Citizen of the Month” or “Volunteer of the Month” award, to be published in the local paper and on the City’s website. The website page dedicated to this award should include ideas and links to opportunities for community involvement.
- B) As an immediate follow-up to the adoption of this Plan, create separate tasks force to address land use, City charter review, City-Town cooperation, and downtown/Main Street. Task forces should utilize the momentum of community participation generated by the comprehensive planning process and include diverse perspectives from throughout the city.



Policy Area - Administration & Government

Action Items

Status

- 4) *Engage the Town of Oneonta and surrounding communities in additional dialogue regarding regional issues and the potential for shared services.*

SHORT-TERM (0 - 2 YEARS)

- A) *Contract for continued sharing of services or additional cooperation of such with the Town of Oneonta.*
- B) *Create a direct liaison between the City and Town who will attend regular meetings of important community leaders.*

MID-TERM (3 - 5 YEARS)

- C) *Revise City policy regarding usage fees, both to city residents and visitors, charged for public facilities such as parking, public transit, and public pools.*
- D) *Work with the Town to encourage the development of multi-use trails and the improvement of roadway shoulders to encourage biking and walking to and from the city.*

ONGOING

- E) *Charge the Intergovernmental Affairs Commission with tracking the number of sports camp rental units, ensuring that their numbers are consistent with the quality of life vision expressed in this Plan.*



Oneonta as an Arts & Cultural Destination

ONEONTA AS AN ARTS & CULTURAL DESTINATION

The following is a list of Objectives and Action Items, taken directly from the five policy areas on the previous pages, related specifically to opportunities for the community to enhance arts and cultural destinations and activities. In addition to these Objectives and Action Items, the Vision of the City of Oneonta (page 15) states that: “Oneonta is a community that will continuously improve its standing as a regional destination for **the arts**, sports tourism, shopping and collegiate activity.

Action Items

Status

DESTINATION & IMAGE

- 1) *Ensure that Oneonta has a clearly-defined image that is effectively marketed.*
 - C) Work with Otsego County Tourism to contract with a firm that will promote tourism in the city. The firm should work on “branding” the community, a campaign aimed at **solidifying Oneonta’s marketable identity.**
- 2) *Improve tourism coordination and information sharing opportunities among local and regional partners.*
 - B) Examine the possibility of creating **an Arts and Cultural Affairs office.**
- 4) *Improve the relationship between the colleges and the community, enhancing positive impacts and reducing negative impacts.*
 - A) Increase college student population involvement in the beautification (neighborhood clean-ups, **public art**, etc.) and promotion of the city.
 - I) Continue to work with the colleges to define marketing, economic and implementation partnerships that will **enhance the image of the city.**



Oneonta as an Arts & Cultural Destination

Action Items

Status

ECONOMIC HEALTH & REVITALIZATION

- 1) *Support the vitality and sustainability of existing businesses.*
 - H) Have **festivals and events** downtown prior to and after events at the Foothills Performing Arts Center, the colleges, etc.
- 2) *Attract additional businesses to the city that reflect the city's vision for its future.*
 - C) Work with the City's Downtown Developer to aggressively pursue the attraction of businesses that fill significant gaps in desired products and services. These may include small-scale grocery/convenience stores, clothing stores, tourism-based retail (sports, **arts, entertainment, collegiate, etc.**), and boutique/gift shops. A detailed inventory of potential properties for infill development will be necessary for this endeavor.

QUALITY OF LIFE

- 3) *Improve/expand social and recreational opportunities for various age groups.*
 - B) Develop a monthly or seasonal "Seniors Night" in which downtown merchants offer discounts to senior citizens for dining, entertainment, general merchandise, etc. The event could include **live music or other attractions** and will work to restore confidence and pride in the city among the senior population as well as support downtown businesses.
- 4) *Strengthen partnerships with community not-for-profits and other organizations to improve quality of life (housing, youth services, employment and support services).*
 - D) Encourage the colleges to hold student events which directly involve community members (**concerts, art shows, presentations, lectures, etc.**) at off-campus sites.



Oneonta as an Arts & Cultural Destination

Action Items

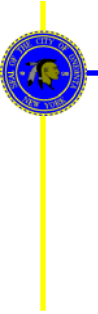
DOWNTOWN

1) *Improve Downtown's ability to complement the commercial, tourism, industrial, and retail areas in the town and the region.*

A) Building on the desire to be **an arts and culture center**, provide a common space downtown that can be utilized by local artisans and business owners for hands-on projects with customers.

Status





Relationship Between the City & Colleges

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CITY & COLLEGES

The following is a list of Objectives and Action Items, taken directly from the five policy areas on the previous pages, related specifically to improving and capitalizing on the relationship between the City and the colleges. In addition to these Objectives and Action Items, the Vision of the City of Oneonta (page 15) states that: "Oneonta is a community that will continuously develop strategic partnerships between government, businesses, **higher education**, and citizens to create a sustainable economic base. Oneonta is a community that will continuously improve its standing as a regional destination for the arts, sports tourism, shopping and **collegiate activity**."

Action Items	Status
DESTINATION & IMAGE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">1) <i>Ensure that Oneonta has a clearly-defined image that is effectively marketed.</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">D) Work with the colleges to jointly market the desired image of the community.4) <i>Improve the relationship between the colleges and the community, enhancing positive impacts and reducing negative impacts.</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">A) Increase college student population involvement in the beautification (neighborhood clean-ups, public art, etc.) and promotion of the city.B) Encourage the colleges to provide general neighborhood consideration policies to landlords where student housing is located in or near predominantly non-student neighborhoods.C) Engage the Greek community at both colleges to develop more aggressive community service programs in order to mitigate certain negative perceptions associated with college students.D) Establish connections between the colleges and city high schools such as mentoring programs and encouraging high school students to take college courses.	



Relationship Between the City & Colleges

Action Items

Status

- E) **Establish a stronger outreach effort to the colleges** to educate students about local government issues and encourage their participation.
 - F) Consider locating appropriate **student services in the downtown area**, such as a bookstore or other services.
 - G) Secure funding to support additional police positions to patrol neighborhoods and downtown areas.
 - H) Create a team comprised of city and **college representatives** that will meet regularly to encourage open dialogue and to share ideas for problem solving.
 - I) Continue to **work with the colleges** to define marketing, economic and implementation partnerships that will enhance the image of the city.
- 5) *Improve the aesthetics and functionality of the city's gateways, including Main Street intersections and I-88 connectors.*
- B) Determine if there is interest locally, possibly with a **mix of year round residents and students**, to form a Gateway and Corridor Enhancement Club that will work with the DPW to plant and maintain all vegetation at gateways and primary corridors in the City of Oneonta.

ECONOMIC HEALTH & REVITALIZATION

- 2) *Attract additional businesses to the city that reflect the city's vision for its future.*
 - D) Develop a partnership between the City, County, State and **the colleges** to plan, design, build and staff a business incubator space for green technologies.
 - E) **Work with the local colleges** to understand the student population needs and develop strategies for locating appropriate businesses in the downtown area of the city.



Relationship Between the City & Colleges

Action Items

Status

- 3) *Increase the variety and affordability of housing choices for all ages and incomes.*
 - C) Identify the housing needs and **desires of college students** and lower and middle income populations to determine if the supply is adequate.
- 6) *Facilitate the growth of the environmentally conscious, or “green” technology sector of the economy.*
 - A) **Work with the colleges** to define feasible green technology sectors to focus recruitment and research and development efforts.
 - B) Strive to develop partnerships with other green technology research centers throughout **the SUNY system** that can assist with Oneonta’s development as a research and development center.

QUALITY OF LIFE

- 1) *Ensure that City codes and incentives encourage residential, commercial, and industrial development consistent with the character of this traditional small city.*
 - D) Revise the zoning ordinance to **restrict rental properties**, including summer rentals, from the Walnut Street Historic District. Serious consideration should be given to expanding this restriction beyond the historic district to preserve other well established owner-occupied single family neighborhoods.
- 3) *Improve/expand social and recreational opportunities for various age groups.*
 - A) Work with the Chamber of Commerce to develop **college student-targeted events** that will encourage and highlight the positive aspects of the college-city relationship.



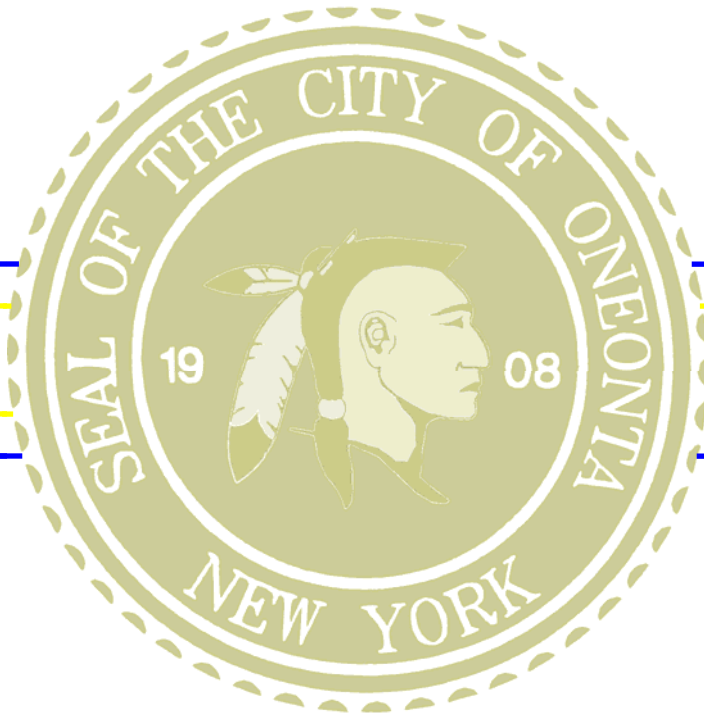
Relationship Between the City & Colleges

Action Items

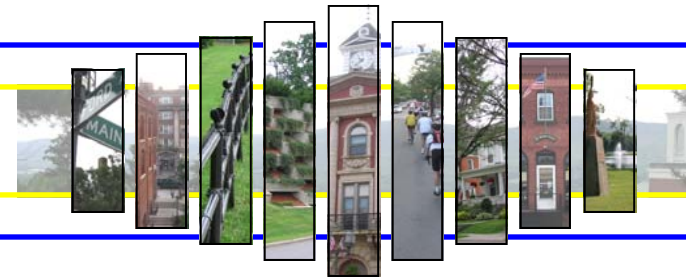
- D) **Work with the colleges** to develop college student-staffed recreational programs for the city's youth.
- E) Develop a similar program to D) above that engages the senior citizen population.
- 4) *Strengthen partnerships with community not-for-profits and other organizations to improve quality of life (housing, youth services, employment and support services).*
 - C) **Encourage the colleges** to hold student events (concerts, art shows, presentations, lectures, etc.) at off-campus sites.
 - D) **Work with the colleges** to establish community service programs (both required credits and volunteer opportunities) such as neighborhood clean-ups, landscaping maintenance, fundraisers, food and clothing drives, etc.

Status





Chapter 4 -



Future Land Use



Overview

OVERVIEW

Future land use planning involves identifying how the land in a given area should look and function, if redevelopment or new development were to occur. However, it also strives to preserve essential areas of the city such as residential neighborhoods and the central business district. While land use planning plays a key role in determining the location of development, that is not the only function it serves. It also helps to create a sense of place and a common vision for the community. The manner in which people perceive their environment, organize their time and determine local interaction is defined, in large part, by how the land uses are organized within their community. The sense of connectivity, the feel of a place and the overall success of a community is indelibly tied to land use.

Existing Land Use (see map on page 35)

Oneonta's existing land use is primarily residential, as is the case in most cities. There is substantial land dedicated to parklands, as well as large properties owned by the Hartwick College and SUNY Oneonta. Much of the college-owned property is undeveloped and will likely remain open space in the foreseeable future. Wide corridors of land owned by the railroad and New York State Department of Transportation traverse the city, due to the presence of a major rail corridor and Interstate 88. These lands are largely undevelopable, with the biggest exception being the former Delaware and Hudson railyards. Downtown Oneonta is primarily commercial, including many properties that have rental units. The combination of commercial and residential properties define downtown as a true mixed-use area, which differentiates it from the more homogenous commercial areas along the state highways.



Residences in Center City



Main Street at Chestnut Street



Overview

Future Land Use Plan

The future land use plan shown on the next page is a visual representation of the community's future approach to land use. A full-size version of the map is included at the end of this chapter. The map includes subtle changes that will help to support the policies and objectives outlined in this Plan and serves as the basis for updating the City's zoning ordinance. The land use design guidelines that follow the map provide additional insight into the areas identified on the map. Guidelines are very general and a more in-depth set of guidelines should be developed as part of an update to the zoning ordinance.

Imagery of appropriate development styles for each land use area are provided on the bottom of each page. Some images are from Oneonta and represent where the community has already established appropriate design and scale. Other images come from a variety of communities outside Oneonta and depict recommended development styles for a given land use category. These images were selected based on the results of the Preferred Development Survey. Occasionally an image is included to demonstrate a development style that should be avoided and is noted as such.

It is important to realize that the future land use plan section of a comprehensive plan is primarily designed to provide guidance for future development patterns and appearances. This section does not constitute an enforceable law, such as a zoning ordinance, but it does outline the vision for future land use and should be considered a foundation for future zoning revisions.



Site of the future Foothills Performing Arts Center



Bicyclists navigate a busy intersection on the edge of downtown



Land Use Design Guidelines - Residential

RESIDENTIAL

Areas designated as residential should include a wide variety of housing options. The City of Oneonta has a diverse population, including college students, young families and elderly, that require a diverse selection of housing. From town homes and rental apartments to single-family dwellings, Oneonta should strive to make residential areas consistent or complementary throughout the city. As one travels through the city's residential areas, stark differences in housing stock condition and maintenance should be minimized which will create smoother transitions between adjacent neighborhoods and housing choices.

While increasing home-ownership is viewed as positive for the community, there should always be ample choices in affordable rental properties to serve students, elderly, and lower-income residents. Rental properties are often cited as a source of nuisances within the city. However, the future land use plan addresses residential uses in general. Additional policies pertaining to rental properties are addressed in Chapter 3.





Land Use Design Guidelines - Residential (Cont'd)

RESIDENTIAL (CONT'D)

Although Oneonta is almost fully developed, there may be opportunities for residential development in the form of infill and redevelopment in the future. Oneonta should ensure that all new residential development is integrated into the existing street network and located in proximity to services and attractions, such as schools, shops and offices. Future residential development should minimize the creation of cul-de-sacs in order to provide automobile and pedestrian connectivity. Any future development should continue the current sidewalk system.

The proposed types of uses seen as appropriate for this land use area include:

- Single-family residential homes;
- Town-homes and multi-family residential development that respect the scale and design of surrounding uses;
- Home-based businesses with minimal parking requirements;
- Bed and Breakfasts; and
- Parks, schools, and other community resources.



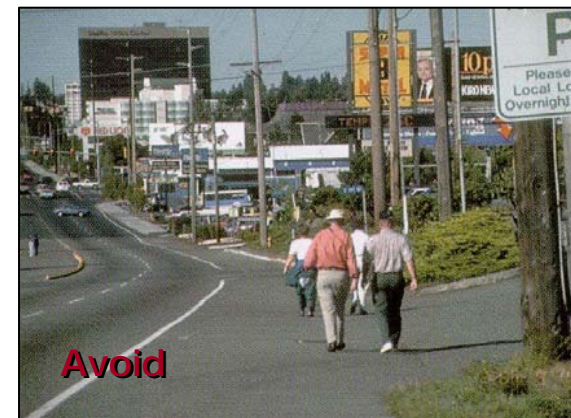
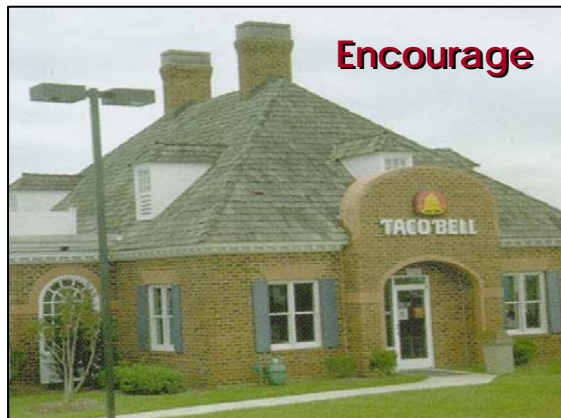


Land Use Design Guidelines - Commercial

COMMERCIAL

Commercial areas of the future land use plan include the southwestern part of the city along River Street, the former Delaware & Hudson railyard (with the exception of some environmentally sensitive areas) and the NY State Route 7 corridor on the east side. It is important to note the difference between the commercial and neighborhood transitional designation, a separate land use described in the next section. Commercial areas are larger in scale and tend to be less integrated with surrounding residential areas. There are exceptions along Route 7 and River Street, and the edges of these areas should receive additional care to respect the transition into residential neighborhoods.

Commercial areas may also contain light industrial uses, though a separate part of the city is designated exclusively for light industry. Environmentally-conscious, or “green” design is strongly recommended for new commercial and industrial development. These uses tend to consume large quantities of energy and often have higher pollution emissions. Environmental-based regulations can largely be addressed in a well-designed zoning code and should include strict regulations and protections regarding new water users and developments which would cause significant water usage or discharge.





Land Use Design Guidelines - Commercial (Cont'd)

COMMERCIAL (CONT'D)

In general, the former railyard is best suited for commercial and/or light industrial uses, but redevelopment of the site should remain flexible. As described in Chapter 3, the community should consider a strategic partnership between the City, the colleges, and emerging energy-based businesses to develop a “green” technology park or business incubator space on the site. A more detailed analysis of market trends, site constraints, and land use recommendations can be found in the *Delaware and Hudson Railroad Yard Market Report and Master Plan (2007)*.

In general, commercial development should be designed to respect its surroundings and address the street beyond just automobile access (see bottom left image). The proposed types of uses seen as appropriate for commercial areas of the land use plan include:

- Retail;
- Restaurants, hotels, and other hospitality services;
- Offices, banks, and other professional services;
- Galleries, museums and artist’s studios;
- Gas stations, auto repair, and convenience stores;
- Builder supplies and sales; and
- Warehousing and small storage yards.





Land Use Design Guidelines - Neighborhood Transitional

NEIGHBORHOOD TRANSITIONAL

This category includes two of the primary gateways into the city—along State Routes 7 and 23 on the west side and the Main Street corridor from Exit 14 to the viaduct. These areas should complement the scale and design of Downtown in order to provide a gradual transition between commercial and residential uses.

Both gateways are in walking distance of hundreds of households yet are currently designed almost exclusively for automobiles. New development and redevelopment should reflect the surrounding neighborhoods and be smaller in scale with more pedestrian amenities. Excessive front-loaded parking should be avoided, while shared-use lots, rear and side lots, and on-street parking should be encouraged.

Residential uses, including single-family homes and rental units are acceptable as they assist in transitioning from the commercial corridor to the neighborhoods. Sidewalks, pedestrian-scale lighting, bike lanes or shared-use lanes, and landscaped roadway edges are recommended to achieve the desired character of these gateways as expressed by the community throughout this planning process.





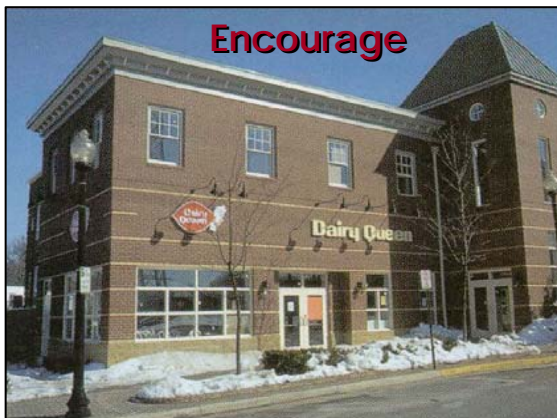
Land Use Design Guidelines - Neighborhood Transitional (Cont'd)

NEIGHBORHOOD TRANSITIONAL (CONT'D)

The Main Street corridor that connects to I-88 has tremendous potential to better serve the River Street neighborhoods and connect them to downtown. Currently, the viaduct over the railroad tracks is a physical and psychological divide between these two parts of the city. Redesigning the bridge to encourage more pedestrian use will complement the recommended smaller-scale designs for that section of Main Street. There are also opportunities to enhance the physical and visual connection between this area and Neahwa Park to the east.

The proposed types of uses seen as appropriate for this land use area include:

- Retail;
- Single-family and multi-family residences;
- Galleries, museums and artist's studios;
- Restaurants; and
- Offices and professional services.





Land Use Design Guidelines - Light Industrial

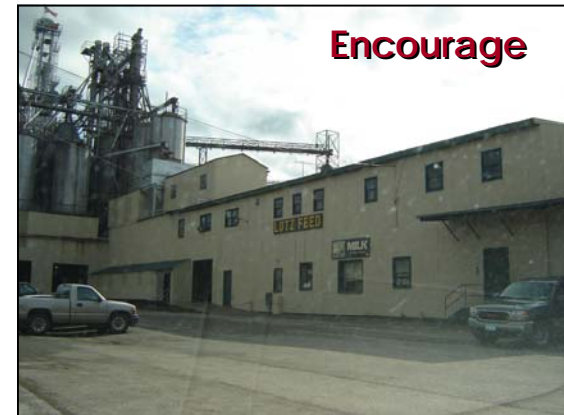
LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

Light industrial uses are important generators of tax revenue, jobs, and locally available goods and services. Just as importantly, these types of uses can have a significant impact on the image and sense of place of a community. Frequently, communities need to reach a balance that allows commercial and industrial uses to be developed in a way that will not negatively impact the quality of life of residents, the value of surrounding properties and the potential long-term environmental and service costs associated with more intense commercial and industrial uses.

In Oneonta, this category is found in the area around Railroad Ave in the southeastern part of the city and in the Pony Farm Industrial Park adjacent to Exit 13. Industrial and commercial uses in the Railroad Ave area should pay special attention to environmental impacts due to the close proximity to a tributary of the Susquehanna River. This area also borders a residential area to the north so development along that edge should be respectful of the transition.

The proposed types of uses seen as appropriate for this land use area include:

- Machine shops and small production facilities;
- Auto repair;
- Warehousing and storage yards; and
- Builder supplies and sales.





Land Use Design Guidelines - Mixed-Use

MIXED-USE

The mixed-use area in Oneonta is centered around Main Street and what is considered to be downtown. It also includes several square blocks surrounding Main Street that serve as a transition from the commercial core to the residential neighborhoods. The city's downtown area has a unique character and architectural heritage that should be preserved and restored whenever possible.

A mixed-use designation is characterized by the inclusion of residential units with retail, restaurants, entertainment, and other commercial uses. It also should include carefully designed public spaces and small pocket greenspaces. Typically, the first floor of a mixed-use structure is given to retail while upper stories are reserved for offices, apartments, and even artist's lofts. Downtown is the best example of this pattern of development, though more opportunities exist to expand this pattern along its edges.





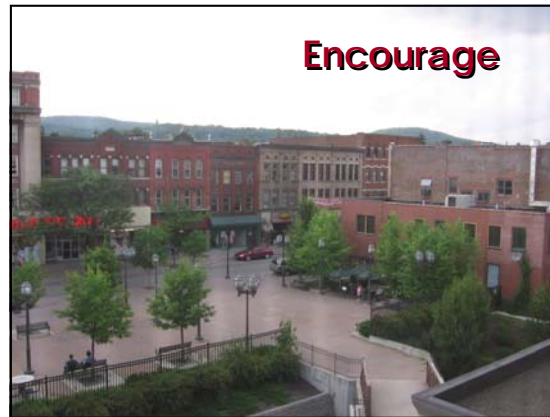
Land Use Design Guidelines - Mixed-Use (Cont'd)

MIXED-USE (CONT'D)

Typically, buildings in the heart of the mixed-use district are built to the sidewalk while single-family neighborhoods that surround the center are found on smaller lots with the home positioned to have a deeper back yard and shallow front yard. These areas are generally thought of as good locations for higher density development such as senior homes, condos and apartments. Mixed-use development is important because it echoes traditional communities where goods, services, and employment opportunities are all within walking distance of residences. This urban fabric is perhaps the most critical area of the city with regards to encouraging public interaction and civic engagement, supporting small business development, and defining a community's identity.

The proposed types of uses seen as appropriate for this land use area include:

- Mixed-use structures that are vertically organized to have retail on the first floor and residential and office space on the upper floors;
- City-scaled residential development, townhomes, patio homes and senior housing facilities;
- Retail and service providers such as corner stores, cafes, restaurants, doctor's offices, bookstores, daily goods providers, crafts and other niche retail;
- Galleries, museums and artist's studios
- Home-based businesses; and
- Hotels and bed and breakfasts.





Land Use Design Guidelines - Community Resources

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Community resources generally include institutions, agencies and organizations that protect and enhance the health, safety and welfare of the community. Usually, these uses are tax exempt and not required to abide by local zoning laws. The future land use plan identifies many existing community services in the city. It does not, however, identify locations for future community resources since they are exempt from land use and zoning restrictions. It is recommended that the placement of future community services be carefully considered for their potential impact to surrounding uses.

In Oneonta, the primary community resources identified on the future land use map are Hartwick College, SUNY Oneonta, the Oneonta Middle School and High School campus, and the wastewater treatment facility near Exit 13. It is not expected that the boundaries of this land use category will experience any substantial change in the foreseeable future.

The proposed types of uses seen as appropriate for this land use area include:

- Public and private education;
- Municipal services; and
- Medical facilities.*

**Note that A.O. Fox Hospital has a small enough footprint to blend well with its surrounding neighborhood and is thus grouped with the mixed-use category on the future land use map.*





Land Use Design Guidelines - Parks & Open Space

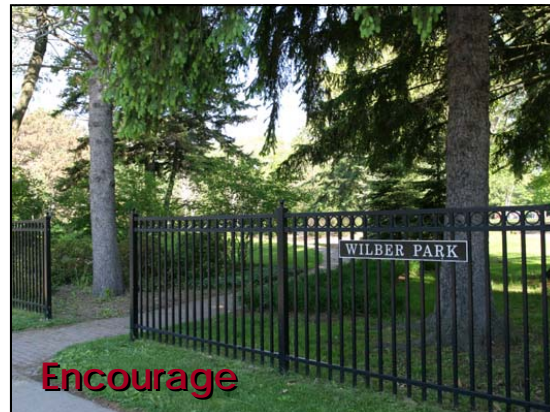
PARKS & OPEN SPACE

This category consists of officially designated parkland as well as open space, which may or may not be accessible by the public. It also includes trail corridors and environmentally sensitive areas such as steep slopes, wetlands, and heavily wooded areas.

Oneonta boasts an excellent park system that serves the community well. The historic, scenic, and recreational value of these properties should be preserved at all costs. This land use category also contains substantial lands owned by Hartwick College. While no plans exist for expansion onto these undeveloped lands, the City and college should remain in communication regarding future campus expansion. These lands are heavily wooded and have very steep slopes.

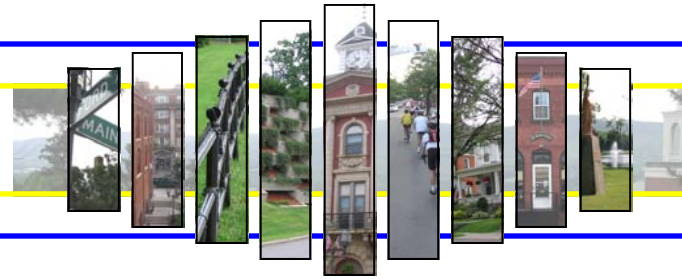
The proposed types of uses seen as appropriate for this land use area include:

- Passive and active parks;
- Multi-use trails; and
- Small-scale environmental interpretive sites.





Chapter 5 -



Conclusion



Conclusion

CONCLUSION

The City of Oneonta is on the cusp of change. Strategic decisions made today will impact the journey and destination of the community over the next 20 years. The 2007 Comprehensive Plan is a culmination of several years worth of review and planning and provides the foundation for this growth management. As the community enters the 21st Century, it must build upon its many assets while addressing conditions that threaten the character of the city. Oneonta has a proud history and is rich in architectural and natural beauty, and these assets must be protected and promoted. The community character could be compromised if the various challenges are not addressed in a strategic and comprehensive manner.

The vision, policies, objectives, and action items set forth in the Plan should be used to guide future actions and decision making. The future land use plan provides an additional level of guidance, identifying areas for specific land uses along with general design guidelines. The Plan is designed to be a user-friendly, working document for key City officials and staff members, community leaders and other involved community stakeholders. The activities outlined in the Plan cannot be undertaken by the City's governmental leaders alone. Over the next several years, residents need to come together to complete the tasks included in the Plan. Successful implementation requires ongoing communication and cooperation among the leaders and residents of Oneonta. Collectively, they can ensure a healthy and prosperous future for generations to come.



Main Street near Ford Ave



Monument in Neahwa Park



186 North Water Street
Rochester, NY 14604
www.clarkpatterson.com